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[AN UNPLEASANT RECOGNITION.]

POOR LOO.

By the Author of "Dan's Treasure," "Clytie Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl," etc.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

LOO AND MABEL AT SPA.

"Fate's dark recesses we can never find,
But fortune at some hours to all is kind;
The lucky have whole days which still they choose,
The unlucky have but hours, and those they lose."
— DRYDEN.

ON the morning of the same day that the seclusion which had reigned over Drayton Abbey for ten years was broken, and a dinner party given for the entertainment of the Grants, five persons met and seated themselves at a table in the salle, where breakfast and luncheon was served, in the Hotel de Flanders at Spa.

A watering-place which is a thousand feet above the level of the sea usually boasts of keen fresh air, and this morning the cold was positively intense for the middle of September, and the appetites of our travellers were sharp and ravenous in consequence.

"We have had such a ramble," said the youngest of the party, a girl of some sixteen or seventeen, if one should judge from the youthful lines of her tall, willowy figure, and the frank, almost childish expression of her lovely face.

"Ah! where have you been?" asked a tall, stately lady, who was evidently the chaperone of the party.

"Oh, Mr. Jack knocked at our door as we had arranged last night; aunt didn't feel inclined for a walk, so he and I went first of all down to the Spa,

in the middle of the town, where we drank some of that horrid water," with a wry face, "and then right on beyond through a long promenade with avenues of trees and lamps as though the good people here indulged in a nightly illumination; then getting beyond this we ascended steep paths that wound along the hill side, until we got quite up high and could see the town with its white houses and the river rushing so madly along, and I don't know how long we should have wandered about, but I got dreadfully hungry, so we came back to breakfast."

"Time, too, I should say," grumbled the elder gentleman. "Jack ought to have known better than to have taken you so far; it's nearly ten o'clock."

"It was my fault. I wanted to go; but I hope I haven't kept you waiting," returned the girl, brightly. "Have you been down long, auntie?" she added, turning to the third lady of the party, whom those who had met her years ago would still recognise as Mabel Travers.

"No, dear," was the reply, "and the colonel has only just come down; if you had been five minutes earlier you would have had to wait for him."

At which Loo, for she it was, laughed brightly, declaring that he never could forget he had left India, and had no longer any native servants to grumble at.

And then there was comparative silence for a time, broken principally by the clatter of knives and forks and plates and occasional orders given in guttural tones, for some forty or fifty people were breakfasting in this room, the greater number of them being Russian and French, the German element being even in smaller proportion than the English.

"What a row those confounded foreigners do make," muttered Colonel Talboys, pausing when the pangs of hunger had been assuaged. "What are they saying, my dear?" turning to Loo. "I can't make out half of their lingo."

"They are principally talking about gambling," replied the girl, with a smile; "something about a bank being broken. Ah, there is the little Russian who travelled from Antwerp with us; what name had he on the card he gave you, Colonel?"

"Count Ladislais Schobelloff," replied that gentleman. "Ah, yes, he is coming towards us; I can't say that I like the man."

"And I don't like him," said Mabel Travers, decisively.

"Oh, my dear," interposed Mrs. Talboys, "I think him most charming; he told me about his estates in Bohemia and his malachite quarries in Siberia, and he promised to show us some rare and curious pieces of jewellery that he had picked up in his travels and intended to take home to his sister. I thought him a most entertaining man. He told me he was coming to Spa on purpose to gamble."

"Malachite quarries!" echoed Jack Talboys, with contempt; "do you know that malachite is a carbonate of copper, and is found only in copper mines. He might as well have told you he had large diamond quarries; I don't believe in the man, he seems to me nothing better than a vulgar Jew."

"Just an Englishman's prejudice," retorted his mother, loftily; "perhaps I made a mistake about the quarries; at any rate he told me they hunted bears in his forests at Bohemia."

"Boars, I should think," sneered the young man, "though one need not go so far for them, he was a pretty good specimen of the animal himself last evening, don't you think so, Mrs. Loo?"

"He tired me very much," said the girl; "he talked in such a loud tone, and I was weary with travelling, and I always dislike to be obliged to listen to a continual chatter when a carriage is bumping up and down over rough roads, or the railway train is creaking and grumbling and groaning as if in pain. But here he comes."

At that moment, the Russian having caught sight of our party, approached.

"Good-morning," in very tolerable English. "You have recovered from your fatigue," with a bold glance of admiration at Loo, "and you will go to de Kuraal; de Bank was broke three times last week; I meet you dere, I have one friend whom I will introduce if you permit me; ze day is lovely; au revoir," and the little man, undoubtedly of Israelitish extraction, whatever his wealth or rank might be, walked off, while Mrs. Talboys, who had a faculty for making inopportune observations, said:

"You have made quite a conquest, Lucy, my dear; you may never have such another chance; just imagine being Countess Schobelloff."

"I should not like her to imagine anything of the kind," said Miss Travers, coldly, "nor do I think matrimony a subject to be so often jested about; besides Loo is so young that it seems almost like sacrilege to associate the idea of marriage with such a child."

"Oh, my dear, you have some very exalted ideas of marriage just because you haven't tried it," laughed Mrs. Talboys, to whom any kind of snub or rebuke was like so much water on a duck's back, and never by any chance ruffling her feathers.

Part of the reason perhaps why she was so reckless in ruffling the plumes of others.

It will perhaps be as well to explain here that Miss Travers and Loo, after residing for over ten years in various places on the continent where the girl's education was the first care and consideration, were on their way home to England, having got as far as Antwerp when they there met the Talboys, whom Mabel had known many years before. A few days spent in this city and they were persuaded by their friends to accompany them to Spa after which they would travel back to England together.

Thus it is that we found them the morning after their arrival in the Belgian watering-place, hungry and eager to discover all the opportunities for amusement and the beauties of the place.

If the last eleven years had produced a change in Elizabeth Fitz-Howard Hill, they had also done their work upon Loo Travers.

From the beautiful, sensitive child she had developed into a lovely maiden, now on the very border-land that separates girlhood from conscious womanhood.

Nay, perhaps she had crossed that boundary; be that as it may, the shadows of hope and fear and the various forms of love and hate which passion takes have not yet crept over her, and she is as bright and careless and life enjoying as a child.

Nor does her native purity and innocence come from ignorance.

Smile if you like, but at sixteen Loo Travers is in her way, a very learned and highly accomplished lady.

In her way, I repeat, for it is of necessity but more schoolgirl's knowledge.

French, German, and Italian are as familiar to her as English, and long, weary lectures on many sciences has she patiently listened to and duly taken notes upon, and if these said notebooks might be questioned her learning would seem profound. Unfortunately, however, the knowledge was in those books rather than in her head, and though the facts set down there had certainly passed through her mind, they had left but slight impression behind.

Still, in languages, music, and art she was far ahead of girls of her age with similar opportunities, and Mabel Travers, who loved her as though she had been her own child, was very justly proud of her and her attainments.

But to return to our party, who are now on their way to the Kuraal, or gambling saloons, where roulette and rouge et noir are carried on nearly from morning till night.

Hiatry tells us that in former times the gaming houses belonged to the Bishop of Liège, but at the time when the Talboys and Travers visit is priestly hands no longer grasp such ill-gotten wealth, and though the profits of the establishment were said to exceed forty thousand pounds a year, the decree for their suppression had gone forth.

They are busy and flourishing enough on this bright crisp day in September, however, and Loo, who had heard and read of, though never seen such a place before, walked into the room with a feeling of awe and dread as though she were going to see something frightfully immoral, yet having all the same some superstitious awe about it.

Nothing very dreadful met her eyes, however; having ascended a handsome staircase and walked into the enchanted rooms where the goddess of Chance held undisputed sway, she was disappointed rather than otherwise to find a suite of rooms, in one of which were all kinds of newspapers and magazines the best samples of the current literature of the day,

while in the centre of each of the other two rooms were long tables around which a crowd of people three or four rows deep were gathered.

Very handsome were the rooms, the windows of which looked upon the gardens of the Redoute, and a large fire blazed brightly in an English grate in each room, looking by far the most cheerful thing there, for though the crowds round the tables were not noisy neither were they a happy-looking concourse of people, and as yet Loo had not attempted to push her way in to look at what was going on at the tables.

"Come, Miss Loo, you have not looked at the players," said Jack Talboys, who was by her side. "We must risk something, too, if it is only for the benefit of the establishment. See, here is a vacancy. Now what do you think of it?"

But Loo made no answer; the faces of those gathered round the table, old, young, rich and poor, patrician or plebeian, had all to a greater or lesser extent a look of intense repression upon them which seemed to have blotted out for a time the distinctiveness of their own individuality, and the ominous words she had heard one lady say in an undertone to another as she came into the room flashed upon her mind as a kind of commentary upon the scene.

"A man lost all his money and shot himself here last night."

While she is still buried in thought a voice says at her side:

"You will play for me, Miss Travers? It will be lucky; I shall win if you will. You have never played before?"

"No, and don't mean to now, count," was the reply. "I should be afraid," with a shudder, "of never being able to stop."

"Ah, that is your fancy, your imagination, and you might make me a fortune. See that lady there, she is English, and she is cool, as—so—as do weather. She will break the bank if she do win like this."

Looking in the direction indicated, Loo saw a young lady of some six or seven and twenty, with a pile of gold before her that every minute increased as the light rattle and clink of the roulette board, and the voice of the croupier, showed she is continuing to win though her stakes are constantly doubled.

Fascinated almost against her own will by the success of this woman, Loo watches her with hands for a time as she puts down the golden pieces, or sweeps them towards her, until her own wonder from the woman's beauty to her figure and face, when the girl turns pale and gasps with dismay and doubt, as in the round, bird-like eyes, and the pale, closely-chiseled, yet cruel features of this woman she recognises after eight years absence, Constance Dorset.

Standing behind her, too, there is a man, oh, so like her, and Loo's heart sinks like lead as she feels rather than knows that this must be her old persecutor, Herbert.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AN OLD ENEMY.

"In fortune's empire blindly thus we go

We wander after pathless destiny,

Whose dark resorts since prudence cannot know,

In vain it would provide for what shall be."

DAN DEN.

Loo's first impulse on recognising the Dorsets was to run away and hide herself, but second thoughts overcame this desire.

They would not remember her, for she was changed far more than they could be, and they were far too intent upon their gambling to take any notice of anyone else, but for all that she shrank back, giving her place to a wizened little woman, provided with paper and pencil, with which, by a series of dots, she worked out a system in which she had implicit faith, even though, as to-day, she lost persistently.

When Loo moved away from the table, Constance Dorset was still winning, and if the girl had followed her own instincts and desires, she would have returned to the hotel, packed up her trunks, and started by the next train for England.

Not that she knew anything about Constance having confessed her guilt, and being banished from her father's house in consequence.

No, that had been kept a profound secret from all, except Miss Finch, who was entitled to know it, but to have breathed it beyond would have been to open the old wound afresh, and though it seemed horrible that a murderer should be at large, it was still worse for a father to give up his own child to an ignominious death.

So, when explanation was necessary for anyone entitled to inquire, it was stated that Constance and her step-mother being no longer able to agree, she had been sent to some friends on the Continent, where,

for the present, at least, she was likely to remain.

Thus she had stayed abroad all these years, never living long in the same home, or with the same people, everyone being glad to get rid of her, even though they knew not of her fearful crime, till her life had become a misery and burden to herself and a trouble and affliction to others.

Wearying of the life she was condemned to lead, for though her father allowed her two hundred a year, he had long ceased to control her movements, and craving will for some social position or home that she might call her own, Constance wrote to her brother Herbert, suggesting that she should come out to India to him.

She knew well enough that the world did not hold her guilty, nay, that she was pitied, and regarded as one upon whom the sins of others had been cast—particularly by those who did not personally know her.

She thought she might begin life afresh in the East, and forgetting the past, ceasing to speculate upon the future, live only in the present, as in this part of the world she found it impossible to do.

But Herbert's letter in reply to her suggestion was not encouraging.

"He should soon be entitled to a year's leave," he wrote, "and he should then come back to England, therefore it was useless for his sister to think of coming out to him, and they could discuss when they met the desirability of her returning or not with him."

This had been at the beginning of the same year that we met them at Spa.

Two months later Herbert sailed for England, and during the following six months he had spent his time principally in England, until a few weeks previous to the day Loo recognised him when he had come over to see his sister, and enjoy her society.

The enjoyment might be doubtful, but hitherto he had been able to endure it.

Time leaves its crow's feet on the hearts as well as upon the faces of some people, and Constance Dorset was one of them.

Her temper, never good, gentle, or submissive, had become violent, and a want of all natural sympathy for the sufferings of others, or of affection for either human or dumb animals, characterised her to such an extent, that she might almost have had a blight, equivalent in malignity to the "Curse of Khamu," breathed upon her.

If questioned, she would tell you she never kept pots or flowers, because directly she grew dead of them they died.

They made no friends, for children shrank from her, and girls of her own age hushed their whisperings and confidences when she approached, and matrons, who began by extending the hand of cordial friendship and protection, felt a chill grow over them, even if they had no better cause, and soon a distant bow was all the recognition they gave her.

But with Herbert surely it would be different, for she loved him.

Indeed she had no one else in the world to love.

All her other brothers and sisters had rapidly followed poor little Freddy to the dark land through which all must pass before emerging into the bright realm of deathless life; her father had thrown her off with loathing and horror, self convicted also in that he had not been more of a judge and less of a father, and delivered her up to the hands of the law.

Men are not, as a rule, fond of demonstrations of affection towards themselves, particularly from their sisters.

The effusive affection of other men's sisters might be tolerable, even enjoyable perhaps, but when a man, unaccustomed to anything of the kind, is expected to kiss his sister each time he leaves or enters the house, and very often to sit with his hand in hers or her arm round his neck, he fondly gazed upon and told how much she loves him, he is apt to get not only weary and bored, but somewhat nauseated by such an abundant dose of sisterly affection, and to suggest impatiently that she shall bestow her endearments upon "some other fellow."

Herbert actually did make this observation, the consequence being that his sister recoiled from him as though he had struck her.

"I didn't mean to vex you, Conny," he hastened to add, seeing how pained and angry she looked, "but it is slow work spooning a sister, and you'd find it ever so much more fun if you'd get a real lover of your own, besides, it's time you got married; why, let me see, how old are you; eight and twenty? This won't do, if you don't manage the business here soon I shall have to take you out to India and get you turned off there."

"I shall never marry," replied his sister, decisively, "so don't talk of it."

"Fudge!" was the contemptuous retort. "I have heard many women say that, and they'd jump down the first fellow's throat that asked them. Come, shall we go to the Kursaal? I've half a mind to tempt fortune by risking a gold piece or two. I never put down more than a couple of francs before."

"And I never played," said his sister, coldly. "Then you shall," he laughed; "perhaps you'll be lucky. I'll find the coin, and we'll share the winnings."

Thus it was that brother and sister were in the gambling saloons on the same morning as the Talboys and Travers paid a visit to them.

Hoping to escape their notice Loo looked about for Miss Travers, but she had gone into the next room where rouge et noir was the centre of excitement, and Mrs. Talboys seeing Loo with her son walked a step or two towards them, having two foreigners in her train, neither of whom would have seemed to have mistaken their vocation of bag in hand they had walked about the streets of London calling, "ole clee?"

One of them was the Russian Count Escholas Schobloff, the other he introduced as his friend, Count Heaviloff, the latter being only a shade less prepossessing than himself.

The Count tells me you won't play for him, Lucile," said Mrs. Talboys, with a simper, "so I am going to see if my hand will bring him luck; won't you come and look on, dear, I shall feel so nervous," with another little simper.

"No, I would rather not if you will excuse me, I want to find my aunt, do you know where she is?" "In the next room," Jacky, who will take Miss Lucile. Now count, I hope I shan't lose your money, if I do I shall feel uncomfortable, and I really know nothing about it."

With which Mrs. Talboys allowed herself to be led off by the two foreigners, who had evidently faith in any body's luck rather than their own.

"Aunt," said Loo, in an undertone, as soon as she could catch hold of Mabel Travers' arm, "who do you think is here? Who do you think I have seen?"

"No one very dreadful, I hope; you look pale and frightened, child; what is the matter?"

"Constance Dorset and her brother Herbert are here; I have seen them."

"Nonsense! If they were you wouldn't recognise them, nor they you. I know that Herbert has returned from India on leave, but what should bring him here?"

"I don't know, but there he is in the next room, and Constance is winning such a pile of money; oh, auntie, I don't want to speak to them, it is foolish, I know, but the very thought of Herbert terrifies me."

"It is foolish, but I have no wish to renew our acquaintance with them either; my last meeting with Herbert was not a pleasant one."

"Indeed! Was he rude to you?"

"Yes, I have forgotten most of it now, but we are decided upon one point, we don't wish to know him."

She had never told Loo of his nocturnal visit, rightly judging that it would only excite and frighten her without doing the least possible good.

"No, we will not know them," said Mabel Travers, as she walked out of the room to come in collision with a gentleman, who like herself was walking one way while his attention was distracted in another.

"I beg your pardon, I hope you are neither! Good Heavens, it is Aunt Mabel!" and the very man she was at that moment declaring she would not know grasped her hand, shook it warmly, and seemed as though if they had not been in a public place he would have embraced her.

Too much taken aback to be able to show coolness or a desire to be an utter stranger to him, Miss Travers allowed her hand to be warmly shaken and a glance of recognition to appear in her face as she said:

"Herbert Dorset?"

"Yes," he exclaimed, eagerly; "I asked my step-mother where you were and she told me the last she heard of you was from Antwerp. I spent two whole days in roaming about that city in the hope of meeting you. But surely you are not here alone?" he went on, looking eagerly around, for Loo, seeing the thing she most dreaded occur, had turned back to the crowded table, thus hoping to escape observation.

"No—" hesitated Miss Travers; "I am travelling with friends. I suppose you are alone—unless you are married."

"Married?" he repeated with a laugh, "no, not quite such an idiot, particularly in India; but I am not alone, Constance is with me. We have just stopped playing, having cleared a thousand pounds."

"A thousand pounds!" repeated the lady, incredulously.

"Yes; broken the bank. Fun, isn't it? She never played before, and if she'll take my advice never will again. It is unwise to tempt the gods. But where are you staying, aunt? I must call upon you."

"Hotel de Flanders," she replied, glad on any terms to be rid of him, while he returned to Constance to help her to carry away their treasure.

"Five hundred each; not a bad morning's work," laughed the young man, as he smiled at the crowd that looked upon him and his companion with envy. "Come along, Conny," and in his exultation the thought of poor Loo and his desire to meet her passed out of his mind for the moment.

Oh, if she could only have gone away, have kept his eyes from ever gloating on her fair face again! But it was not to be.

The relentless hand of fate has shown itself in making Mabel Travers do what she was protesting she would not, and poor Loo may well dread the future, which she cannot control.

Truly, l'homme propose et Dieu dispose.

CHAPTER XXX.

CLOSING ROUND.

"As one condemned to leap a precipice,
Who sees before her eyes the depth below,
Stops short and looks about for some kind shrub
To break her dreadful fall." DRYDEN.

Two days passed.

Herbert Dorset had called at the hotel, and left his card, but Miss Travers and Loo were out at the time, while, by what seemed a rare piece of good fortune, he and they never met casually in the streets or at any public entertainment.

On the third day Colonel Talboys remarked to his son:

"I met an Indian acquaintance yesterday, Jack, and asked him to dine with us to-day, table d'hôte as usual; mind you are back in good time. I heard you talking of riding with the ladies to the Cascade de Coo this morning, and as I'm not going with you I hope you'll remember."

"Oh, yes we shall be back in good time," was the careless reply. "What is he, civil or military?"

"A competition waller," with disdain, "but not a bad sort of fellow. They get the best of it out there in that hole of a place; the army won India and kept it, and these prize of civilians get the spoil. The army is going to the dogs, Jack, you may be thankful you never entered it."

"I don't think it can be worse than the Bar," grumbled his son; "when you've eaten your terms and been called, what are you? a briefless barrister. You can't ask for a brief, and solicitors, unless they have some interest in you, won't send one; I'm not sure that I shan't throw it up and go in for the Indian Civil. I'm only twenty, so I have a good year before me. If a man has a fortune the Bar is all very well, but if he hasn't and wishes to marry he'd better go in for something else while there is time, particularly if he wishes to marry."

"Wishes to marry?" repeated his father, "what, you don't mean that you have got any ridiculous notion of that kind in your head?"

"Well, I suppose a man may think of marrying at some period of his life," replied his son, in a half defiant tone; "at any rate, father, you did."

"Yes, yes, of course; one of the things one has to go through before they die, but I don't see that one need go out to be roasted in India in anticipation of such an event."

"That may be, father, but I want to have a career, not play at having one; however, we can talk about this at another time; you are not coming with us?"

"No, I've seen waterfalls enough in my life; mind you are home in good time for dinner; is your mother going with you?"

"Yes, I think so unless she hesitates at leaving you alone."

"Oh, I'm all right; a man doesn't want women always about the place; they manage those things better in the East—there they lock them up when they're not wanted; not that I think they are much better for it."

"I don't think it will be prudent to talk of your preference for Masters to European customs in that respect before the ladies, particularly as they don't apply to Englishwomen, do you, father?" remarked the young man, with a laugh.

At which the elder one shook his head with a knowing smile as he replied:

"Ah, yes; as well let them think themselves perfect, poor things."

An observation which it was perhaps quite as well Mrs. Talboys did not hear, since even her husband

himself admitted that he was often slightly hen-pecked.

It was a pleasant party of four which started in the open carriage from the hotel that morning, Mrs. Talboys and Miss Travers in the seats of honour, while Loo and Jack, with their backs to the horses, laughed and talked, keeping their companions amused and as heart-hearted as though no shadow of grief could come over them.

The Cascade de Coo is nine miles from Spa; and the varied scenery as they rode along excited the admiration of our travellers, particularly of Loo, who felt so light-hearted and in such exuberant spirits that she looked half-laughingly at a solitary horseman descending one of the paths which wound up round a hill to their right. There was something so comic in his appearance, for his pony was small, he himself was big, and riding down a steep hill he never a graceful attitude at any time.

Just as he reached the road in which they were riding along, however, she recognised the man, and her face became white to her very lips, while her tongue for the moment refused to utter a sound.

The horseman stared at her, but, though he admired her lovely face, there was nothing familiar in it, unless it were a far off memory, too distant and indistinct to be relied upon; and Miss Travers' face was hidden from his momentary glance by her sunshade, and he passed on wondering at the look of terror that had greeted his approach.

So strange was it that that the memory of it haunted him all day long, and he had not forgotten it when he went to dine according to invitation with his old Indian acquaintance, Colonel Talboys.

Here, if she were still in Spa, the young man expected to meet Mabel Travers, since most of the inmates of the hotel would naturally dine at the table d'hôte, and to be frank, this was the one thing that made him hesitate about accepting the invitation.

For Mabel Travers had, the young man felt, snubbed and slighted him, since he had called upon her at the hotel, left his own card and his sister's with the address also at which they were staying, but no notice had been taken of his visit, no return call made, and Constance had told him that not only was she averse to remembering the acquaintance of their step-mother's sister, and she had no doubt the dislike was reciprocated.

Nor, when he came to think of it and remembered their last interview in England some ten years ago, did he think his sister's view of the case improbable, and though he would have liked to have seen Loo or heard something about her, that boyish infatuation which had shown itself in such a very disagreeable manner had, if not utterly died out, been so buried under the dust of time and more mature love passages, that the chances were, if not revived, it would stand a good chance of dying out altogether.

"Let me see; she will be about the awkward age now," he mused as he walked towards the hotel. "Ten years ago; she will be sixteen or seventeen now, with elbows and shoulders sticking out at right angles, and all her prettiness very probably gone away with her childhood. Ah; there is the girl who turned so pale at meeting me this morning, and with old Talboys, too. I wonder who she can be; scarcely his daughter."

The question was soon answered, however. Little dreaming who the Colonel's guest was, the ladies were descending to the great dining-room, the dinner bell having rung, when on the stairs they met the man who had been invited to join them.

"Ah, Dorset, only just in time. Let me introduce you to the ladies and my son. Ah, you know Miss Travers and Miss Loo Travers! Who would have thought it? Will you give Mrs. Talboys your arm? Come Jack, with Miss Loo or the soup will be cold."

And thus they went on, Loo clenching nervously at her companion's arm. She had been hungry enough before Herbert came, now her appetite had quite deserted her.

There was no escaping from the party, however. Miss Travers gave Loo a smile of encouragement, and secure in the company of her friend, the girl made a successful effort to overcome her terror.

Besides when she came to look at him again from the safe shelter of Miss Travers on one side, Jack Talboys on the other, with the Colonel, his wife and guests facing them, he did not look so very formidable, and was decidedly a great improvement upon the Herbert Dorset who had once known.

He was a tall, some people would have called him a fine man, looking fully thirty, though he was some three or four years younger, his face bronzed with the sun, his dark hair closely cropped but with a tendency to curl, while the coarse and cruel expression of his mouth and the lower part of his face were hidden by the moustache, beard and whiskers, which so abundantly covered it.

"You didn't recognise me, I suppose, this morning?" he observed to Loo across the table.

"Yes I did," she replied, not deigning to tell a falsehood, though perhaps slightly tempted to do so. "Then you had the advantage of me," he went on, "for I never thought for a moment that it could be you."

"No, perhaps I have changed the most, but then you were older than I before you went away, and besides that, you are so much like Constance that anyone might recognise you as belonging to each other."

A half frown came over the young man's face; though he had heard nothing about the confession of her guilt that his sister had made, and he himself had no certainty about it, there was something so strange and erratic about Constance, one might almost say at times so mad, that whereas he might once have felt flattered to be compared to her he now took it as anything but a compliment.

Finding so little was to be got from Loo, he next addressed himself to Miss Travers, with inquiries as to the probable date of her return to England, whether she was going to reside in her old house at Notting Hill, and how and where Lady Travers was.

"Oh, my aunt is quite well," said Mabel, replying to the last question; her home is in London; she is quite independent of me now; her brother, who was offended with her for marrying as she did, and had not spoken to her for many years, died about six months ago, leaving her a handsome income; it is to be hoped she will live long to enjoy it; her last letter was rather amusing."

"I can well imagine that. I should have called upon her when I was in England if I had thought about it; however, I return again soon. You know that the baby, as they call her, is now a big girl, and that Miss Finch is married."

"No, I did not know the latter piece of news; who has she married?"

"A cousin of my father's named Letwell; he isn't a young man, neither is she a young woman as far as that goes."

Then he caught his breath, remembering that Mabel Travers had by this time reached, if not passed, her seventh lustre.

"Miss Finch is not so very old; she and I are about the same age," returned Mabel, with a smile; "but about Constance, what makes her live abroad, and who is she staying with now? It is almost a pity she did not follow you out to India, she might have got married there."

"She talked of coming out with me, but as she says she shall never marry, I don't see the use."

"She might keep house for you," suggested Loo, who thought it would be a capital thing for both brother and sister to be at such a distance from herself.

"I might prefer a wife to manage my house," replied Herbert, with a glance that made Jack Talboys' face flush and Loo look quickly in another direction, so that she might not notice it, "and," Herbert went on, "if I were to marry Constance would not be a desirable resident in the house."

"No, I should think not," assented Mabel, emphatically; while Mrs. Talboys began to inquire about Miss Dorset, how old was she? Was she good looking? She must call upon her, and a long fire of small talk followed, the Talboys being all this time blissfully unconscious that the Dorsets they were speaking to and of those whose name had been so notorious some ten years before in connection with the Grove House murder were the same.

For Herbert had carefully concealed the fact while in India, never speaking of his family if he could avoid it, and when he did write to his father, always sending to his business address, until the whisper had gone abroad in that land where the residents are so given to scandal, that his father was a butcherman or a butcher.

When the story came to Herbert's ears he laughed loudly and somewhat bitterly, but never contradicted it; the truth he felt would be far worse than this absurd fiction, and he had a morbid horror of being pointed out as one of a family in which such a terrible, and to the world at large as well as to himself, such a mysterious tragedy had occurred.

By tacit consent poor little Freddy's death had never been mentioned between himself or any of the family since he first left England, and he was in momentary dread now lest Mabel or Loo should in any possible way allude to it.

But the dinner passed off far better than might have been expected, save that Count Laidias Schobloff, having seats for himself and friend next to our party, would persist in joining in the conversation, and excited the ire of both of the young men by asking and obtaining permission from Mrs. Talboys to present a bouquet to the young lady.

"It's only a polite acknowledgment for the money I won for him at the gaming table the other morning," said the Colonel's wife, when, an hour after as the party of six were seated in their private sitting-room, a waiter brought up a bunch of flowers certainly equal in size to a large Cheshire cheese, with the count's card and compliments, by permission of Mrs. Talboys, to Miss Lucile Travers.

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed the girl, while her face flushed brightly. "I am so fond of flowers. Really the count does improve on acquaintance; doesn't he?"

At which Mabel smiled, the young men frowned, and Mrs. Talboys commenced a panegyric on the count, which her husband interrupted by suggesting a game of cards.

"I don't care about playing," said Jack.

"Neither do I," said Loo.

"Then we will play whist," said the Colonel.

While to Herbert's disgust Loo and Jack at the further end of the room talked and laughed merrily; thus paying attention to them he trumped his partner's tricks and blundered as though he had never handled a card in his life before.

(To be Continued.)

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

PRINCE OF WALES'S THEATRE.

THIS elegant, comfortable, and fashionable house reopened on Saturday with Tom Taylor's three-act comedy "An Unequal Match." A brilliant audience crowded the theatre, and well might it be so, since the occasion was the reappearance after a long interval of Mrs. Bancroft in Hester Grazebrook, a part which this accomplished actress has made her own. The transition, too, from the simple Yorkshire girl who has given her whole heart to the supposed artist, her highest ambition being a cottage with a honeysuckle porch, a cow, and "nice round pig," to the accomplished wife of Sir Harry Arncliffe, the reigning beauty of a foreign watering-place, was a triumph of contrasted histrionic skill. Mr. Bancroft's Blenkinsop, the affected "gentleman's gentleman," was a study of unexaggerated yet irresistible comedy. Mr. Sudgen's Sir Harry Arncliffe was easy and polished; but Doctor Botcherby, the Yorkshire physician, as played by Mr. Arthur Cecil, was so entirely natural and unconsciously droll as to amuse without a sense of exaggeration. Mr. Flockton made the most of old John Grazebrook, the blacksmith, and Miss Litton personated the wily widow Montross with care and pointed clearness. Bessy Hebbethwaite, by Miss Kate Phillips, was thoroughly characteristic. The three scenes of the three acts are painted and set up in the most artistic style, and the finish of every detail of acting and stage management adds as usual to the perfection of the play at the Prince of Wales's Theatre.

STRAND THEATRE.

"FAMILY TIES" is the title of a new, clever, lively comedy by Mr. F. O. Burnand, which, though its author candidly acknowledges his obligation to a four-act French comedy, "Aux Crochets d'un Gendre," for the leading idea, is so nearly original in construction and wholly so in dialogue and witticisms, as to establish a better claim to novelty than half the "original" pieces produced at our metropolitan theatres. Mr. Burnand's comedy is more than an adaptation and bears no trace of a translation. Every trace of Gallic manners, turn of thought, and social morals is swept away, and "Family Ties" is a comedy of English humour, English manners, and English expression. The plot is exceedingly simple—Mrs. Percy Lennox (née Barton Bryce) is just married and settled down in a splendid home with a rich and loving husband when ruin falls upon her father, her mother, Mrs. Barton Bryce is destitute, and her sister is a destitute dependent upon the generosity of her brother-in-law, Percy Lennox. The newly-made wife permits her whole family to quarter themselves upon her indulgent husband's cosy little household, and the result is what might be expected. The Barton Bryces are thankless and disagreeable, accepting the Lennox's kindness as no less than a right and duty to her parents and relations. They further sow dissension between the previously happy pair, and turn their daughter's paradise into a pandemonium. The crabbed, grumbling, ruined father, admirably played by Mr. Horace Wigan, is an amusing specimen of pretended humility; while the martyred

mother-in-law is a groaning specimen of spleen and ill-temper; the foolish and affectionate wife, too, who does not see how she is breaking her own and her husband's peace out of kindness to her disagreeable relations, are all capital and natural characters. Mrs. Barton-Bryce, the much put-upon and injured mother-in-law, was amusingly played by a débutante, Miss Clouston Foster. Mr. J. G. Grahame as Percy Lennox, Mr. W. S. Penley, in the small part of Alexander Pumbleton, with Misses Lottie Venn and Camille Dubois, were excellently suited with their parts. M. Marius, however, so well known in musical burlesque, struck into a new line of comedy, as Baron Victor de Xarades, a Frenchman, whose ambition it is to be mistaken for an Englishman, he was exquisitely comic. In a word "Family Ties," which well deserves good acting, received that justice at the hands of the Strand company.

The second piece, "Champagne, a Question of Phiz," by Messrs. H. B. Farnie and R. Keeco, was worthy of its name and the merry little tune at which it is nightly uncorked. Elfevessing with fun, creaming with humour, and sparkling with pun, song, and equivocal, "Champagne" contains neither weariness nor headache. The dresses are smart, the songs are almost all encoored, the dances are light and pretty and not too long; M. Marius, the indefatigable, rattles through his share of the fun, and he is spiritedly seconded by Misses Camille Clermont, Lottie Venn, Camille Dubois, and a band of active corpees. All who wish a bright pleasant evening now that they are growing chilly out of doors should excoerce themselves in the little snug Strand Theatre.

STANDARD THEATRE.

MR. JOHN DOUGLASS, the indefatigable manager of the Standard Theatre, appeared on Tuesday evening in the character of a dramatic author, having joined with him, as collaborator, Mr. Frank Stanforth. The play is entitled "The Queen of an Hour," the heroine being the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, cleverly played by Miss Kate Neville, and the other characters, King Edward VI. (Mr. Stanforth), the Duke of Northumberland (Mr. James Bennett), the Earl of Arundel (Mr. Byrne), Lord Guildford Dudley (Mr. W. Redmond), and the Princess Mary, afterwards Queen, (Miss Ernestone), and Cornelius Agrippa, a French physician and astrologer (Mr. Chapman). The principal deviations from history to suit stage purposes are the administration of a sleeping draught to "the boy king," Edward, whereupon the Duke of Northumberland and his conspirators proclaim Lady Jane Queen, and making the Princess Mary devotedly in love with Lord Guildford Dudley, who marries Lady Jane. This gives rise to a scene between the rival queens; Mary vows vengeance, Jane is deposed, the Earl of Arundel proclaims Mary, and Lord Guildford and Lady Jane are led to the block. Mary, however, relents, but her merciful intent is frustrated by Arundel, and the tragedy is consummated by the deaths of Northumberland and the hapless "Queen of an Hour" and her youthful husband.

The piece is well put on the stage, Mr. Bennett's villainous Duke of Northumberland being vigorously acted, and Mr. Redmond's Lord Guildford Dudley was finished and graceful. The rival princesses were effectively personated. At the end of the fourth and fifth acts Messrs. Douglass and Stanforth were called, as were the principal performers, and greeted with unanimous plaudits.

We shall notice Mr. Gilbert's new comedy, "Engaged," next week.

MISS KATE SARTLEY is about to re-open the Royalty Theatre, which has been entirely renovated, and the interior reconstructed, with an English version of "La Marjolaine."

THE admirers of legitimate acting and elocution of a school of which examples are becoming daily more rare, will be glad to hear that Mrs. Stirling is appearing in a series of morning performances at the Globe Theatre. On Saturday the talented old favourite played Mrs. Malaprop.

ON Saturday Tom Taylor's "Still Waters Run Deep" was played, including in the cast Mr. Charles Wyndham (John Milderway), and Mrs. Stirling (Mrs. Hector Sternhold).

THE Court Theatre re-opened on Saturday with a new play, entitled "The House of Darnley," a posthumous work of the late Lord Lytton. It was left unfinished, and the last act is from the pen of Mr. Charles Cogan.

Mlle. Theresa Tietjens died on Wednesday morning, the 3rd instant, at her residence, St. John's Wood. The gifted cantatrice was in her 49th year. Her first and her last appearance were in the character of Lucresse Borgia in 1849 and 1877.



[BARBARA'S TRIAL.]

THE LADY OF THE ISLE.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"Oh, Heaven of Heavens!" exclaimed Estelle, on Madeleine's announcement that Etiole was about to be married to her guardian, Julius Luxmore. "No, no! I shall not so lose my child! She is too young. She is but a babe! She cannot love this man of thirty-five!" And she half rose in her strong excitement.

"I never said she loved him, madame. Oh, in all affairs relating to love, courtship and marriage, she is as innocent as an infant."

"Then he dare not coerce her! Isolated and helpless though she be, he dare not coerce her!"

"My lady, he not only dare not, but he will not. It is the fortune, and not the hand of this child that is the object of his desire, I feel sure; therefore, he will use no force that might afterward tend to invalidate his claim."

Then since she loves him not, and since he dare not compel her, I do not see how a marriage is to be brought about?"

"Ah, my lady, I told you she was as innocent as the babe unborn of all knowledge relating to love and marriage. She does not know that love is necessary both to the good and happiness of marriage. She is ignorant but that matrimony is a mere arrangement of convenience. And she naturally takes her fate from her guardian, who is of course interested in securing her large fortune and her beautiful person to himself. And she, poor lamb, is even anxious that this union should take place, that she may leave the island and go into the world. She sees the east and west shores of the mainland, only under the strong lights of the rising and setting sun, and so believes that all glory and delight is in what she calls 'the beautiful world beyond.' It appears that her guardian has promised to bring her to this imaginary paradise, immediately after their marriage."

"I see; I see the infamous motive under this! He would give her no freedom of choice, until she is irrevocably his own!"

"That is just what occurred to me, my lady."

"And when, does she say, that this atrocious marriage is to be attempted?"

"Soon after her guardian's return from France, for he has not yet come, or, at least, I have not yet received notice of his arrival. And, in fact, I have not received a letter from Etiole for nearly two months."

"I must save my child! I must go to her immediately."

"Oh yes, dear lady, do! But how will you prove to her your identity as her mother?"

"By nature, first of all! You did not doubt me, although no blood of mine runs in your veins. Still less will she hesitate, who is altogether my own."

"But for the satisfaction of others, dear lady; though you and Etiole may be perfectly certain of your relationship, how will you prove to others that you are her mother, she your daughter, and so establish your right of authority over her?"

"Thus. By documents no doubt to be found in the Island Mansion, which will prove that Etiole is the child of Victoire L'Orient and his wife, Estelle Morelle. And by Susan here, and a thousand others, if needful, that I myself am that very Estelle Morelle."

"So far, so good."

"Now, tell me, how am I to reach this Island, for it is my intention to hire a nurse to take care of you, and to proceed at once in search of my child."

"Oh, thank you, my lady, you are all goodness; but do not stop to find me a nurse."

"I must do as I see fit in that respect, Madeleine; that is not the question now; but how I shall reach the Island."

"My lady, I cannot tell. For years past no one has arrived at the Island except Mr. Luxmore, and he came in his own schooner."

"Then tell me at least what is the position of this Island in the Bay?"

"I cannot tell you exactly; but it is within two or three hours' sail of a point called Brande's Headland."

"Brande's Headland?"

"Yes, my lady. You know the place?"

"Somewhat."

"It was always my late master's favourite point of communication with the shore. I believe also that there is always a sail-boat at the place, under the charge of the negroes. And I think perhaps your quickest and surest way of reaching the Isle

would be to go to the Headland and hire a boat from there."

"So I believe. I now know what to do. And now, Madeleine, for the letter that we must write."

The requisite materials were found in the drawer of the little stand, the top of which, when cleared, served as a writing-table.

"Dictate now, Madeleine, as you would have done had my relationship to your nursing never become known to you."

The quadroon looked surprised at this order; but with perfect confidence in her patroness she obeyed. It was just such an affectionate letter of congratulation as any nurse might have written to her beloved child on her birthday.

And in the postscript was added by the lady's wish merely these words:

"I have news of your mother!"

"That is sufficient; we must not overwhelm the child; we must communicate only enough to prepare her for my coming," said Estelle.

After the letter was sealed and duly directed, it was given in charge of an honest lad, the son of a poor widow living in the same house, who was called up to carry it to the post-office.

"And be sure, my boy, to inquire if there is a letter for Madeleine Rose," said the sick woman, as the lad left her side.

"It has been so long since I have heard from Etiole, and I think there must be a letter in the offing," she added.

As there was much to do in a little time the lady and her attendant arose to take leave.

"I shall endeavour to send you a nurse this evening, Madeleine. And if you should get a letter from Etiole will you send the lad to No. 5 — Lane, and let me know?"

"Indeed I will, my lady."

They now took leave and departed.

On reaching the street door the overcast appearance of the western sky struck them.

"I am afraid there is going to be a dreadful storm, my lady. Look what a black cloud," said Susan.

"Yes, we shall have a tempest. I knew by the state of the atmosphere that we must have one before long. And it is coming. But, Susan, we have a great deal to do, and storm or calm, we must do it this afternoon; for I propose to sail in the very first vessel that leaves this port for the Chesapeake, even

though there should be one going to-morrow morning. So, in order to save time we must take a cab." And as an empty carriage was just then passing Susan stopped, and engaged it for the remainder of the afternoon.

When mistress and maid were seated within the first order given was:

"To the Infirmary Intelligence Office."

A drive of ten minutes brought them to the place, where Estelle was so fortunate as to engage a well-recommended, middle-aged woman, who, being paid in advance, agreed to go at once to the sick room of Madeleine.

They next drove to the nearest upholsterer, and sent a new cot, mattress, and bedding for the accommodation of the nurse.

They then purchased all the day's newspapers, and gave the order:

"No. 5.—Lane."

And in half-an-hour they were at home.

They were no sooner in the parlour than Susan struck a light, relieved her mistress of her outside garments, and carefully ensconced her in her easy chair. Then placing a lighted lamp and a pile of newspapers on the table beside her, she said:

"And now, my lady, while you look at the ship news I will hurry into the kitchen and have your tea ready in a moment."

She hastened to the adjoining little back room, leaving her mistress opening the papers.

Estelle turned at once to the list of vessels "to sail," ran her eye eagerly down the column, and then exclaimed, reading aloud:

"For Baltimore, on the 17th of July, the fast-sailing brig 'Ocean Queen,' Branda Master."

"It is my old friend Barbara, whom I desire, but dread to meet. Yet she could serve me in this cause better than another. Shall I go with her? Let destiny decide. If I can find another vessel going to Chesapeake to-morrow, or the next day, that is to say at or before her time of sailing, I will go by such an one. If I cannot, I will sail with Barbara; for I have said that I will certainly go by the frigate that leaves."

Then addressing herself again to the list, who went carefully down the column. And afterwards she successively consulted the ship news in all the remaining papers, but without finding any other vessel that was to sail for the Chesapeake for days to come.

"Indubitably I go with Barbara," concluded the lady, as she folded up and put away the last paper.

Susan then opened the door and said:

"Supper is served, my lady."

Estelle went into the little back room and seated herself at the neat table. But her spirits were too much hurried to permit her to do justice to the fragrant tea and nicely-browned toast that Susan had prepared.

Susan scarcely observed that her cookery was slighted. The storm that had been gathering all the afternoon was now about to burst upon the earth and sea, to the mortal peril of all, great and small, that floated upon the one or stood upon the other. And Susan was lying about, closing shutters, and letting down windows, for the better preservation of their own tiny homestead.

Scarcely was the last fastening secured before there blazed forth a blinding flash of lightning, followed instantaneously by a deafening crash of thunder, that seemed to shake the whole heavens and earth into dissolution.

Susan, arrested half way across the floor, turned deadly pale, and grasped the nearest chair for support.

"Come into the parlour," said Estelle, rising from her almost unsteady seat.

They immediately went into the front room; Estelle sat down in her easy chair; Susan, who was dreadfully afraid in storms, dropped down at her mistress's feet, and buried her face in her mistress's lap.

And then for six hours there raged one of the most terrific tempests in the memory of the present generation. From seven p.m. till one a.m. wind, hail, thunder and lightning made night hideous with their strife.

Unprecedented desolation marked the progress of the storm on shore. Trees were twisted off at their trunks, or torn up by the roots; groves, gardens and growing crops were devastated. In the towns and cities, old buildings that had stood the storms of centuries, as well as new edifices in process of erection, were alike levelled to the ground. Creeks and rivers, swollen to enormous size, overran their banks, flooding the whole shore, and sweeping off vegetation, buildings, cattle, men, women and children. The sea arose in its awful might, and advanced upon the

land, desolating many towns and villages along the coast.

Great as was the devastation of the storm upon the land, those who were competent to judge provided a far greater mischief to the ships at sea. And those who had relatives or friends aloft waited in extreme anxiety to hear news of them.

The six dreadful hours were passed by Estelle and her attendant in prayer to Heaven for all those who were exposed to the horrors of the storm.

At one o'clock the frenzy of the tempest began to subside as the passion of an infuriated madman might, in sudden howls, and sometimes returns of frantic violence.

And by two o'clock the thunder and lightning had ceased, the sky was marbled over with troops of black, dispersing clouds, like a disbanded army of storm fiends, and the moon shone out, clear, bright and benignant, as some fair angel speaking peace to the world.

Susan lifted her head from the lap of her mistress, where all this time it had lain, and arose from her kneeling posture.

Estelle also stood up and bade her attendant prepare for retiring.

Evening prayers were said.

And thanks were returned to Heaven for the calm that had succeeded the storm.

Then, unsuspecting of the great damage that had been done by land and sea, the mistress and the maid cheerfully sought their beds.

Estelle slept in the front room over the parlour. Susan occupied the back room over the kitchen. The door of communication was always open between the chambers.

Thus Susan, whose mind had been too thoroughly excited by the events of the day to admit the possibility of her composing herself to rest, knew also that her mistress did not sleep for an instant; but turned and turned in her bed, and sometimes arose softly and paced the floor.

Hoping that the lady would at length lie down and sleep, and fearing to confirm her wakefulness by addressing her, Susan refrained from speaking or moving until some time after daybreak.

Then, seeing that her mistress opened the blinds to admit the daylight, and proceeded to make her morning toilet, Susan quietly arose and passed into her room.

"My dear girl, go back to bed. I did not wish to disturb you so soon after your loss of rest. Go to sleep again," said Estelle, as soon as she perceived her attendant.

"As if I could sleep again! Dear lady of mine, you have not slept all night, no, not for an instant. Why?" inquired the girl, with affectionate solicitude.

Estelle turned and came up to her humble friend, laid her hand upon the girl's shoulder, and with her eyes, her lips, her whole eloquent countenance beaming with a tender gladness, said:

"My Susan, many, many nights in my life have you known me to lie awake, from eve to morn, from sorrow. But, never, in the whole course of my existence, Susan, have I lost but this one night's rest for joy! Oh, Susan, think of my not being able to sleep for joy! My Estelle, my own child, whom I have mourned for so many years as dead. To think that she lives, that I shall soon clasp her living form to my bosom! It grows upon me, this sense of joy, Susan, it overpowers me! Oh, pray Heaven that I, who cannot sleep for gladness, may not become unable to reason because of ecstasy!"

"Heaven bless you and preserve you, in joy as in sorrow, my lady," prayed her faithful attendant.

Alas! short-lived joy!

Scarcely had the words of self-congratulation left the lips of the mistress, and been answered by those of fervent sympathy from the maid, ere the door-bell was rung.

Susan hastened her toilet, and wondering who it could be who came so early in the morning, went down to open the door.

It was Jerry, the lad whom they had sent to the post-office on the preceding evening.

"Please, ma'am, will you ask Mrs. Estel to come directly to Madeleine, who has got a letter to show you."

"A letter from whom?"

"She told me to say from the young lady on the Island."

"Good news, or bad?" asked Susan, breathlessly.

"She didn't tell me."

"Very well; run home as fast as you can, and tell Madeleine that my mistress will be with her immediately."

The lad obeyed, and Susan ran upstairs to inform her mistress.

"You needn't tell me. I have heard all, Susan!

Quick! my bonnet and gloves!" exclaimed Estelle, who with trembling fingers was fastening her black silk mantilla.

And in less than five minutes the mistress and maid set out for Madeleine's lodgings.

"I should have sent for you last night, but for the dreadful storm," said Madeleine, as the lady took a seat beside her bed.

"But the letter, Madeleine? the letter! What news? How is she?"

"Well, madame, but—"

"But what? Speak!"

"It seems that another letter has miscarried, since she says that she wrote me about six weeks since, advising me of the fact of her guardian's return."

"He has returned?"

"Yes, madame—and lady, it appears from her letter, dated ten days ago, that her guardian had gone to Baltimore to make preparations for their marriage, but was expected home yesterday, which was to have been their wedding day."

"Oh, no, no, no! Great Heaven, no! It cannot be that this innocent girl should be left to fall a sacrifice to that creature's capriciousness. Surely something has intervened to save her. The steamboats have brought us news of many vessels becalmed at sea, in the great stillness of the atmosphere that prevailed until the storm of last night. He may not yet have been able to reach the Island," exclaimed Estelle, vehemently, exclaiming at the nearest possibility, as the drowning catch at seaward.

"Or—he may never reach it. He may have been wrecked. Many vessels must have been lost in the tempest," suggested Madeleine.

"No, Heaven forbid. But the great calm that preceded the storm must have stopped him. In the tempest of last night he had enough to do to save his vessel; he could have made no progress. This morning something may have happened to detain him. I shall sail to-morrow in the 'Ocean Queen,' the first vessel that leaves this port for the Chesapeake. I may yet be able to save my child."

"Heaven grant it, madame!"

"Read the letter now—say, give it to me, if you have no objection."

Madeleine took the precious missive from under her pillow, and handed it to the lady.

Eagerly Estelle opened it.

Artless, affectionate, and full of enthusiasm, was this child's epistle. She wrote of her approaching marriage with the most innocent frankness, treating it as a necessary preliminary to her heart's greatest aspiration, to see "the beautiful world beyond."

She continued by saying that in making the bridal tour they should come first of all to New York, where they should take the steamer to Liverpool, and where also she should be so happy to rejoin her dear Maman Madeleine, whom she intended to take with her as her attendant to Europe.

She concluded with the fondest expressions of attachment and the tenderest epithets of endearment.

"The unsophisticated girl. Oh, Heaven grant that I may be in time to save her," prayed Estelle, as she folded the letter.

Meantime, Susan had been in consultation with the nurse, who quickly prepared a cup of tea and a slice of toast for the lady, who had not as yet breakfasted.

The errand boy, Jerry, was despatched to call a carriage. While he was absent, both mistress and maid partook of some slight refreshment, and soon afterwards entered the cab and drove down to the Street-Wharf, off which lay the "Ocean Queen" at anchor.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The brig lay some quarter of a mile off the shore.

Susan hailed a skiff, which soon put herself and her mistress alongside the vessel.

Barbara Branda's deck, as usual, presented an animating scene of orderly industry. Edwy, as mate, had charge of the fore-castle.

Several men were aloft, at work upon the rigging. Others were at the hatches, getting freight into the hold.

Barbara stood upon the quarter-deck, directing some men who were lowering the long-boat to go on shore.

Upon observing a lady coming over the gangway she quickly walked forward to welcome the visitor. Barbara was the same handsome Amazon; with the same erect and rounded form, the same stately head, firm features, great, strong, flashing black eyes and brilliant complexion, shaded by crisp, rippled bands of glittering, jet black hair.

"Mrs. Estelle! By all that is best, Mrs. Estelle! Welcome, welcome, welcome! I am so overjoyed to see you!" she exclaimed, extending both hands to her visitor.

"Am I so little changed, Miss Brande, as to be recognised at once?" inquired the lady, with a slight smile, as she clasped the offered hand of the girl.

"Changed?" repeated Barbara, looking affectionately into her face. "Yes, my lady, you are changed somewhat—a little paler and thinner, which makes your eyes look still larger and darker by the contrast, that is all. I knew you, of course, at a glance. Ah, Susan, is that you? You are not changed the least in life. How are you? But come into the cabin, where we can talk, for oh, my lady, I think we must have a great deal to say to each other," exclaimed Barbara, addressing sometimes one and sometimes the other of her visitors, as she led the way into the cabin.

"First of all, Miss Brande, I wish to inquire if myself and maid can have berths here?" inquired Estelle.

"Of course," replied Barbara, promptly, as she motioned her visitors to take seats upon the sofa, at the same time placing herself in a chair.

"Then consider them engaged at once."

"You are going to Baltimore or Washington?"

"To neither. We are going back to the Headland, unless you can engage to put me on shore upon East Island."

"East Island!"

"Yes. Why are you astonished, Miss Brande?"

"Because no one ever lands on East Island. It is, in fact, inaccessible at all points save one. Besides, the old man who owns it is as jealous as a Chinaman of the approach of strangers."

"But the old man has been dead nearly a twelvemonth."

"The old man dead! and I never knew it. Though, in fact, everybody on the Island might die, and the rest of the world would know nothing about it. Well, 'tis said that—"

"The angels weep when a babe is born, and sing when an old man dies."

But what has become of the pretty heiress, Estelle?" inquired Barbara, at heart wondering how it was that Mrs. Estelle should know anything of the Isle and its inhabitants.

"The young girl remains there under the charge of her guardian, Mr. Julius Luxmore."

Barbara heard.

She heard this name pronounced without an exclamation, a start, or a change of colour betraying how terrible was the shock she had received, so perfect was the nervous system and so admirable was the self-command of this noble girl.

There was scarcely a perceptible change in her voice as she repeated:

"Mr. Julius Luxmore? You said that the young lady's guardian was Mr. Julius Luxmore?"

"Yes, Miss Brande."

"May you not be mistaken in the name, madame?"

"Impossible, Miss Brande. But why do you ask?"

"Well, I knew Monsieur Henri D'ile for many years, and never heard him mention such a person among his intimate acquaintances. Though it is true that Monsieur Henri, who never encouraged visitors to approach the Island, some years ago even discontinued his visits to the mainland; or else changed his trade from our shore to the opposite one, so that, for the last five years, I have lost sight of Monsieur De L'ile."

"And it was precisely for that length of time only that he had been acquainted with Mr. Luxmore."

"Then it is not strange that I should never have heard of that friendship," said Barbara, too calmly to betray how much she was impressed by this new coincidence.

"But, Miss Brande, I have made a discovery, which I wish to impart to you. But first, will you permit Susan to close the cabin?"

Barbara arose and secured the door, and returning, said:

"Now I am at your service, dear lady. Go on; I listen."

"Miss Brande, this man, this Julius Luxmore, has for five years past fixed his avaricious eyes upon the fortune of his ward, and to secure that has determined to take advantage of her innocence and inexperience, and, child as she is, to marry her. But, if

it should not be too late, I have power, through the discovery that I have made, to prevent this sacrifice."

"You, my lady?" replied Barbara, who neither by look, tone, or gesture, revealed how deeply the iron entered her soul.

"Yes, I, Miss Brande, and hence my intended voyage to the Island. But I must tell you the momentous discovery I have made. You may remember that, in relating my story, I informed you that after the birth of my little girl I just saw her fade away from my fading eyes, and that after recovering from the alternate stupor and delirium of many weeks, upon inquiring for my child, I was told that she was dead and buried."

"I remember, lady."

"I was deceived. My child was not dead. She had been secreted by her grandmother, Madame L'Orient, who, after the transportation of Monsieur Victoire, to make herself acceptable to the childless Monsieur Henri, conveyed the infant to the Island."

"Oh, madame, what a discovery. To what providential circumstance were you indebted for it?" inquired Barbara, who, through all her own aching heart, sympathised with this deeply-wronged mother.

"To a providential meeting and conversation with her nurse, Madeleine, whom the jealousy and caution of Mr. Luxmore had banished from the Island," replied the lady, who thereupon commenced and gave a full and detailed account of the manner in which she had become acquainted with Madeleine, and the revelation that had been made her by the latter concerning the infancy of Estelle, the death of Monsieur Henri, the guardianship of Mr. Luxmore, and the appointed marriage between the guardian and his ward.

And Barbara listened, no outward emotions revealing the inward storm that shook her great soul.

That her betrothed—whom she had mourned as dead these five years past, and to whose memory she had been more faithful than many widows to that of their husbands—should have been for this length of time not dead, but deliberately false—false under circumstances that increased a thousand-fold the heinous enormity of his crime—was a thought that convulsed her soul with anguish. But there existed a merciful possibility that this might not be her Julius Luxmore.

True, the name was rare, the coincidences striking, the circumstantial evidence nearly overwhelming; but she had heard of innocent people being convicted upon much stronger proof, and she would suspend her judgment until her own eyes should convince her of his turpitude. But, until then, what a war in her bosom!

Happily, with her regnant self-control, she let no sign of this inward tempest escape. She answered Estelle very calmly, saying:

"Yes, lady, you are right. If not too late this unnatural marriage must be stopped. And if not too late now, lest it should become so by another day's delay, we must lose no time. It was my intention to sail to-morrow morning for the Chesapeake. But if you wish, and if you will be ready, I will get up anchor and make sail for the Island this evening."

"Oh, how generous you are—how heart and soul you enter into my interests, Miss Brande—dearest Barbara."

Barbara hastened down into her cabin, where she took a rest at her little table, drew writing materials before her, and indited the following brief letter to the Earl of Eaglesdown:

"ERIC 'OCEAN QUEEN.'
"NEW YORK HARBOUR, July, 184—."

My Lord,

"We sail for the Chesapeake this evening. If you would hear of one for whom you have long searched meet me at the Headland, where I shall wait for you."

"If this weather continues we shall reach the Island in five days," said Barbara.

"Heaven grant it may be so, and permit me to save my child," replied Estelle.

"Heaven grant that, also," said Barbara.

"I am thinking of Joseph in Egypt, when he lifted up his voice and said: 'I am Joseph. Doth my father yet live?' Oh, Barbara, you know what I would ask. Do my parents yet live?"

"Lady, when I last heard of Sir Perce and Lady Morelle, some few months since, they were enjoying

their usual health, and living in their customary style, at Hyde Hall."

"Thank Heaven!"

"But, madame, is there no one else that you care to inquire for?"

"Yes! Tell me, Miss Brande, if you can, that he is well and happy. That he has forgotten poor Estelle, and all the sorrows she has occasioned him, and has found, somewhere, a bride to his mind?"

"Lady, he has regularly corresponded with me for the last five years. Each month he has written, asking me if I have heard news of you."

"Miss Brande, I shall trust in you to keep my secret."

"Dear lady, I really will not enter into any bonds of that sort. You must trust solely to Providence for your future. I think if you know how rare a thing is constancy in this world of ours you would set more value upon that of the Earl—I mean Lord Montrossor."

Estelle made no reply to that, but turned the conversation into another channel.

"Alas! for the fair hopes with which this voyage commenced."

The next day the wind changed, and when at last the gale subsided there ensued a dead calm that lasted two weeks, during which the vessel lay like a log, burning under the fierce heat of the July sun.

Barbara and her passengers were nearly in despair.

But we must leave them in their dilemma, and borrowing the wings of imagination, precede them to the Island, to ascertain what, in the meantime, has been the fate of Estelle's child.

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

DESPAQUIS' PHOTO ENGRAVING PROCESS.

M. DESPAQUIS has observed, like all who have occupied themselves with this branch of study, that in an engraving it is necessary to have a grain inside the cavities, while the surface should be of a polished character in those portions destined to reproduce the whites of the image. He therefore set about to discover how such a result could be brought about. He applied to the metallic plate two films of gelatin, the first a thick one containing the grain, and the second thinner and absolutely free from grain. It is due to this second film that M. Despaquis is enabled to produce all the delicacy of half tone. His method of operation is as follows:

In one thousand cubic centimetres of water are dissolved two hundred grammes of gelatin; to this are added twenty grammes of liquid Indian ink and four grammes of powdered pumice, the latter being finely ground and sifted through fine linen. Next, upon a plate of glass which has been waxed, he spreads a sheet of moistened paper, taking care to prevent the formation of air bubbles. The solution of gelatin, previously filtered and maintained at a slightly warmed temperature sufficient to keep it liquid, is then poured upon this sheet of paper. In this way a sheet is secured, covered with a thick film of gelatin having a very fine grain, uniformly spread throughout its body.

When it is desired to make use of this prepared paper the second film is applied, and the sheet sensitised at the same time to do this, it is immersed (prepared side uppermost) in a solution composed of:

Water 500 ccb. cents.
Gelatin 1 to 10 grammes.
Bichromate of ammonia . . 15 "

After remaining in this liquid for some seconds the sheet is taken out, and by two of its corners (still prepared side uppermost) it is drawn over a gelatinized plate, previously prepared with ox-gall, so that later the paper may be easily detached. The sheet, dried in a locality where it is screened from daylight, is cut a little larger than the cliché, and placed underneath the latter.

The exposure of the prepared sheet to the light should be a third that necessary to give a carbon print. As in this latter process, as soon as the printing is finished, the impression is plunged into cold water; so as to transport the print, not to albumenized paper, but a plate of polished steel or copper; it is afterward put under pressure, and allowed to dry, and finally the image developed, as in the carbon process, with warm water. It is, indeed, treated as

if it were a carbon print, rather more care being taken, however, because there is less adhesion between the gelatine and the polished steel.

When the matrix plate has been secured in this way, a mould is made, either in the hydraulic press, as in the Woodburytype process, or in a rolling mill, covering the plate with a double sheet of very stout lead. The mill must be worked two or three times, so that every detail of the image is produced in the lead. Finally you produce by the aid of the electrolyte process a counter-mould, which is the plate from which the printed copies are produced.

A FATAL MISTAKE.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ON hearing Denham's words to the dog, Sam rushed from the inner room of the cabin and the three, for a brief moment, stood staring at each other with bated breath and hair rising on their heads with horror, expecting each moment to hear the death shriek of one in mortal extremity. One brief glance had enabled them to see, by the dim light of the stars, that a figure was crossing the wide open space in the rear of the house, and was still many yards distant from it.

Neither one could bear to witness the catastrophe all anticipated, and they turned their eyes on each other. Even in those moments of dire suspense Denham found courage to say in a jeering tone:

"After all I shall be the winner, without any aid from either of you; so I hold myself absolved from the promises I made you. See how different things might have been for you if you had acted with me."

"I don't believe they'd ha' bin a mite different," said Sam, in quivering tones. "We'd ha' bin de scapegoats anyhow, but of my marster is tore by dat dreggie beast, I'll tell all de rights of it, anyhow, afore you get me hanged for what yer did yerself. He's quick o' foot yet, an' mebbe he'll git in time."

Denham made a threatening gesture toward him, and stepped out of the door, eager now that the first horror was over, to see what the result of the pursuit was. At another time he could have laughed at the thought of the heavy figure of Mr. Carr hastening over the ground with a deadly enemy at his heels; but now he was too anxious for the result he desired to leave room in his heart for any other emotion, save the vindictive hope that soon Bettina, with all her father's wealth, would be his own to tyrannise over through his marital rights.

Pompey suddenly dashed passed him and ran swiftly in the direction taken by the dog, hoping to be in time to call him off before he could inflict a mortal injury on his master. Denham made an ineffectual clutch at him, but the boy evaded it, and with curses, not loud but deep, he stood awaiting the issue of events. He heard the clang of the door as it swung to, and threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of silent rage, as the conviction came to him that his intended victim had escaped.

"Everything goes wrong with me lately—every thing. But I'll not be quite baffled. I will have my wife in spite of all that may be done to keep her from me. The child will fetch her to my feet, and when she is there, I will trample on her at my leisure. Umph! there goes that foolish dog, butting himself to death against the door. A deal of good that will do now that my foe is entrenched behind it."

Pompey, breathless and frightened half out of his wits, at length came up with the dog, and seizing him by the collar, spoke to him, and tried to draw him off, that he might speak to Mr. Carr through the keyhole. But the creature was in a blind fury, and would not be controlled, though he made no effort to turn his rage against the lad. He assaulted the door again and again, till suddenly he uttered a low wailing, and rolled over as if in mortal agony. The next moment he was up again, but he turned to Pompey, and looked appealingly in his face, uttering a sort of whimpering cry as if asking help for some mortal head of his own.

"You needn't ax me for nuffin', you dreggie brute," said the lad, in reply to his mute expression of suffering. "Here you's got me in a orle scrape, an' I dunno what my master 'll say ter me for dis here night's work."

Hearing the voice of Pompey outside, and thinking that he had pursued the dog, and had him again under subjection, Mr. Carr opened the window on that side of the house and sternly asked:

"What did you mean by letting the dog loose

while I was still in the yard? You could see me from the cabin, I am certain."

"Oh! yes, sir, I could see you, but he got away unbeknownst. Ax my daddy to-morrow, and he kin tell you all 'bout it. I follered him up, but I couldn't ketch him in time. You see dat I'm here now do, an' I'll not let him kill hisself bumpin' agin de do'."

After a brief pause Mr. Carr replied:

"Take him away now; he seems to have exhausted his rage, and is quiet enough. To-morrow I shall exact the truth about this affair, for it seems to me that you are not telling it."

"Oh, Lora, marster, never believe I'd willingly do anything to hurt you; no—not if I died for it. I tried all I could to keep the critter back, but he got loose suddintly, an' he war too mach for me."

"Well—well—go off with him now and set him on his rounds. I am safe, though a little shaken, so you need not take on so, as if you were in a mortal dread of me."

He closed the window, and Pompey took the dog, trembling in every limb and evidently suffering slow torture, toward his father's cabin. But he did not intend to enter it.

He knew that he would find Denham still skulking there, and he had no fancy to meet him again that night.

The lad had that passionate fondness for dogs which form so marked a trait in the African, and for this one he had already formed a strong attachment.

The two had affiliated almost from the first, and were now fast friends.

It had been understood that a sedative of some kind was to be given to the animal that night, which would stupefy him and allow Denham to pass through the yard with impunity, and he was to bring with him the drug to be used.

Denham prepared the food, and gave it to the dog himself, and fierce as the creature was, he made no hostile demonstrations toward him.

The two apparently recognised each other as kindred spirits, and thus Denham had been able to perpetrate, without danger to himself, the act of treachery which has been described.

Denham's words in the cabin had been the first intimation to Pompey that his four-footed friend was in danger; but so great was the fear aroused in him by the man he was so lately infatuated with, that he dared not express the resentment and horror that filled his heart.

He sought a little dell through which ran a thin stream of water, that the dying creature might have that solace at hand if he should need it. All fierceness seemed to have died out of the suffering animal, and he lay on the turf with lolling tongue and glistening eyes, gratefully accepting the cool water which Pompey gathered in a large plantain leaf and poured down his parched throat into the stomach burning with the inflammation caused by the arsenic which had been administered to him by the hard man who had patted his head and caressed him while he ate the deadly meal.

"He's done 'pizened him," moaned the boy; "dat's what he's did; an' I hopes it'll come home to hissef yet. He's made daddy an' me think he war suffin' wonderfoul, an' we was ready to do anythink we could fur him, an' here he's bin an' kill dis poor onfortnit critter widout no cause fur doin' of it; an' he tried to git de ole man killed on't'n his way, too; ef he's tole on, I 'spects he'll try to have us hanged, case we was his bee's frien's on dis plantation. I hopes Miss Betty won't go wi' him, ef dey do say dat he's her lorfal husbin'."

Alternately moaning and crying bitterly over the sufferings of his dumb companion the time passed on till one o'clock—the hour at which Pompey was to be on the alert to give warning to Denham in case an enemy was found upon his path when he attempted to make his way to Betty's room.

When the signal came for Pompey in the shape of a loud whistle, the dog was still breathing, but the lad dared not disregard the warning, though he was secretly resolved to do no further service for Denham and meant to sneak back to his dying favourite at the first favourable moment.

With reluctant feet he moved away in the direction of the cabin, and after exchanging a few words with Denham, who was waiting for him in the shadow of a large tree, the two moved on toward the house.

In the meantime Mr. Carr had returned to the room in which Clayton was left, who eagerly inquired:

"What has detained you so long? I heard a suspicious noise from the rear of the house, and came near going out to see what it meant."

"You may thank your stars that you did not, for the hound was loosed too quickly, and I had a run for it to save myself."

Clayton uttered an exclamation, and asked, "How could that happen, unless there is treachery among your own people?"

"I am unwilling to believe that—especially of Sam's family. But I shall look into it to-morrow, and find out the meaning of what has happened to-night."

After that they talked in guarded tones, for Bettina's room was above, and they feared to disturb her.

After a time profound silence was maintained between them, and both were on the alert to hear any sound which might indicate an approach on that side of the house.

The hours passed slowly enough, and eleven, twelve, one, sounded from the large clock in the hall.

The night seemed unusually still; the summer insects were dead; the birds were sleeping, or had winged their way to a more southern clime, and not even the hoot of an owl broke upon the quiet repose of night.

The watchers were surprised that there was no indication of the hound's presence in the grounds, and at length Clayton whispered:

"It is strange that we do not hear the dog moving about. It is getting very late; had I not better make a reconnaissance, and ascertain if he has been kept on guard? Pierce as he may be, I think I could deal with him if he attempted any demonstrations against me."

"He would certainly do that, and in our case discretion is the better part of valour." Hark! I heard a noise then. Someone is approaching the house cautiously. Ah-h-h!"

Mr. Carr pointed through the crevice which afforded a glimpse of the end of the veranda.

The faint light was obscured by some opaque body, and the rustling of vines was heard as an attempt was made to climb up the wall to Bettina's apartment.

The two watchers arose cautiously, opened the door, and rushed out just in time to seize the fest of the man who was half way up to the pillar to which the rose-vine clung.

Before he had time to utter an exclamation even, he was thrown violently backward, and lay partially stunned upon the ground.

"He must be got to the other end of the house before he comes to himself," said Clayton, sternly; "there must be no disturbance beneath Bettina's windows."

Strong as a trained athlete, he raised the prostrate form of Denham, and with some assistance from Mr. Carr, succeeded in getting him to the farther end of the veranda from which a door opened into the library.

Placing his prisoner on a chair, Clayton proceeded to bind him securely before he recovered the power to resist.

"He is safe enough now, and I think we can dictate our own terms to him," he said, quietly. "We now know there must have been treachery, for the dog was not in the yard at all."

"I will strictly examine into the whole affair, and sift it to the bottom. Now that we have this creature safe, how are we to deal with him, Randolph? He deserves death, yet we dare not destroy him."

"I rather think not," said a faint, but harsh voice from the large chair on which Denham had been bound.

He had slowly recovered consciousness to find himself in the power of the two men he hated most on earth, and, for a time, he was so convulsed with rage as to be incapable of speaking, though he clearly understood all that was passing around him.

His voice gathered strength, as he went on:

"I can tell you the only equitable way to deal with me, Carr, of Carmera, and the only terms on which I will listen to proposals from you. Give me back my wife—accept me as your son—and banish that evil adviser of yours, Randolph Clayton, from your house. Then we can become a happy and united family."

"This is the first time I ever heard of a prisoner and a criminal dictating terms to his judges," replied Mr. Carr, dryly. "When I accept yours I think the heavens will fall, or some other catastrophe as impossible as that will occur. You are here to listen to your sentence, Gerald Denham, and you are to convince me that you will abide by the pledges you will give me, before you are let loose on the world again. Bravado is useless; we have the power, and we intend to use it in self defence."

"Ah, bah! what is the use of threats? You will never dare hurt me in any way, now that it is known that your daughter is my wedded wife. That was a clever performance of mine, yesterday morning, old fellow, and it effectually floors you. Ha, ha!"

His harsh, strident laugh sounded through the

room, and Clayton approached him, and sternaly said:

"There is little cause to indulge in mirth, Captain Denham, as you will discover by the time we are through with you. Speak more respectfully to Mr. Carr, sir, or I shall take you in hand and deal with you myself, and that, too, in a very summary manner."

"Oh, ho! my grandiose Colonel, because you have me at disadvantage you think that you can crow over me as loudly as you please. But there is one thing that you cannot do, and that is, unlouse the knot that binds Bettina Carr to me as my life-long slave, if I choose to make her one."

The insolent triumph of his tone goaded Clayton into replying:

"There is one way to free her from such a wretch as you, and if all other means fail, I will take your life as coolly as I would that of any other reptile. Remember that it is a matter of life and death with you, and act accordingly."

"Really—are skulls and cross-bones to be served up at the feast of reason, which I am bound to attend," was the light reply. "Do you insist that I shall play the agreeable to my dear papa-in-law? I am willing to gratify you in anything reasonable, so here goes."

Then turning to the old gentleman he went on:

"I hope you're no worse for the hop, skip, and jump you had to-night to get away from the fangs of the bound you had set on my track. You are a nice old humbug, you are."

Mr. Carr gazed on him a moment in dumb surprise, and Clayton said:

"It is as I surmised. Some of the people are in league with you, and it was your hand that loosed the dog before Mr. Carr entered the house. No one else would have dared to commit such an outrage."

"Ta—ta! what's the use of using strong words? How could I go near a fierce creature like that without being torn in pieces? The dog was loosed; that is enough; and I have at least as many friends on this plantation as its owner can claim. A word to the wise, you know."

"I do not believe that my own people have turned against me in your favour," said Mr. Carr, explosively. "It is like your impudence to assert such a thing. I'll have Sam and Pompey up to see what they have to say for themselves."

"Of course they will deny everything, but if they turn against me they are only nigs and slaves, and their testimony is worth nothing. Truth isn't in them, you know."

"I should sooner expect it from them than from you," said Mr. Carr, rising to open the door and summon the two who, he believed, were lurking near.

Nor was he mistaken, for on the platform outside of the door stood both father and son trying to make out what was passing within. The bound was deserted by Pompey in his dread of what might happen to himself.

He had seen the capture of Denham, and ran with the news to his father; and the two had come to explain their share in the events of the night, and defend themselves as far as was possible to their master.

"Just as I expected," said the old man, dryly, "Are you prowling there hoping to get a chance to help your confederate?"

"He ain't nuffin 'tall to me, but de wust enemy I ever had in my life," said Sam, gruffly. "I've come to make a clean breast of it, marster. I liked dat man who's tied up yonder—I don't 'ny it, but I'd never ha' done you harm fur his sake, you know I wouldn't now, don't you."

"I did think so till lately, Sam, but what has happened to-night has shaken my faith rather."

"An' you has some cause, marster, but not so much as you think. The captin got 'round me, an' made me b'lieve as Miss Betty was his wife, he had de right to be here, an', anyways, to see her sometimes, if he waan't 'lowed to lib on de place. Well, you see, what came of it was, dat me and Pomp took his part, an' helped him all we could when he came 'bout de place."

"We got dat dere dorg what you ordered, an' made frien's wi' him, an' de captin was 'lowed to feed him to-night arter he came inter de cabin to wait till you was all quiet at de house. He was to give de dorg a dose what would keep him quiet while he went through de yard, an' he did it, sure enough. De pore feller'll never hurt anybody any mo'. He's stiff an' dead down by de branch."

"But you tried to make good use of him before the dose affected him," said Mr. Carr, significantly. "He was set on my tracks while you must have known that I was still in the yard."

"Eh, dere it is, sir, whar de wust part o' de story comes in. De captin was hid in de cabin when you come thar, an' when you was gone he tried to sen'de

hound right straight arter you, and Pomp kin tell you dat it tuk bote on us to keep de dose as long as we did. When I thought you was safe I went inter de other room, an' like a flash dat man a sittin' dar threw open de place, an' set on de dorg. Dat's de whole story, marster, an' may de abissary git me at last if 'tain'tebory word true."

Denham here burst in:

"I have let you go on to the end without interruption, and such an impudent farrago of falsehood I never heard. You let the dog loose, and when Pompey saw that the chances were in favour of his master's escape he ran after him, to make a merit of trying to assist him, after the danger was over."

Both the negroes fell on their knees before Mr. Carr, crying out in chorus:

"He's white, an' we's black; but don't b'lieve him, marster. Don't b'lieve him."

"I don't give credit to a word he says," replied the old gentleman, dryly. "Get up and tell me what bribe that wretch offered you to put him in possession of my estate at once!"

"He said he'd make us free, and give me money to git mysef started in some way o' libin'. But I knowed better'n to trust him. I knowed it would be a hangin' matter, an' of anybody came to dat send it wouldn't be a white man what would have all de money. I was sharp snuff to see dat, sir, an' I kep' clear o' de temptation. 'Sides, what was I to gain by changing marsters when he had jest showed me whata dark hearted man he is?"

"I believe your statement, Sam, because it's straightforward, and you have not made any appeal to the days when we were boys together. You have told me the simple truth without trying to influence me in any way, and you have served your own cause by doing so. You and Pompey may go now, but remember this is the last time you are to allow yourselves to be tampered with by outsiders, and especially by such dangerous ones as Gerald Denham."

"Fo' de Lor, marster, I promise you dat dere shan't nebbber be no mo' 'cause o' hlam'in' o' me: an' as to de captin, he ain't no ways fittin' for Miss Betty, I b'lieves; an' of he got a place here, he'd putty soon find de means to put you out'n yours."

With this parting shot Sam and his son retired, and Denham impatiently shook his fist after the two retreating figures.

Mr. Carr closed and fastened the door again, and then taking his justice seat, as he called it, a large morocco-covered arm-chair, gravely said:

"A new count has been added to the indictment I was ready to bring against you, Captain Denham. Is there any reason why I should have mercy on the man, demon rather, who would have sacrificed my life in so terrible a manner? What have you to say for yourself, sir?"

"Only this, that where a man is condemned beforehand it is useless to struggle for justice. In no court of law will a negro's word be taken if he accuses a white man, and you have nothing but negro evidence against me. It is false, but if you say it is true, what recourse have I in my captive condition?"

"None—nor do you deserve any," said Clayton, sternly. "Mr. Carr and myself are your judges, and we accept the evidence against you, having the internal conviction that it is true."

"Condemned without being heard—pray what sentence am I to expect?"

"Listen, and you shall hear," said Mr. Carr, in his most stately manner. "It is useless to go over the list of the outrages you have perpetrated against me and mine. They are well known to all present, and not likely ever to be forgotten or forgiven. I demand from you renunciation of every claim you may have on my daughter, and a pledge to leave this country within twenty-four hours, in obedience to General Washington's orders. Never let us hear from you again as long as you live. On these terms I will allow Colonel Clayton to take you to Baltimore and see you safely embarked on an outward bound vessel. You have proved too slippery a customer to be trusted again to keep the pledges you have given."

"And if I refuse such terms?" asked Denham, defiantly.

"In that case I will turn you over to martial law, and have you hanged as a spy."

"You dare not. I am your daughter's husband, and if you persist in keeping her from me I will take such vengeance on both of you as will make you wish you had been less insulting in your course to me."

"I shall act as I think best for both her and myself, and the best service I can perform for my daughter is to have you hanged out of the way as soon as may be. I am in deadly earnest, sir; do not

imagine that I am only trying to alarm you, that I may attain ends of my own."

When Denham looked into the white, stern face, worn with all its owner had passed through within the last twenty-four hours, he began to comprehend that his position was one of danger; that this old man would bear no further outrage at his hands, even if immunity must be purchased at the price of his own life.

That he was a coward he have said before, but before showing the white feather, he made one more effort.

"You will break Betty's heart by ensuring the separation from her child; for only as my repentant and submissive wife will I ever allow her to look upon Bella again. She adores the little one: she will never survive so cruel an ordeal as that. I think it is much that I am willing to take her back at all, now that I am rich and independent of help from you, but I am not only willing, but anxious to claim her again."

"I daresay," said the father, grimly. "As to your expected fortune, I believe it to be a myth invented by yourself. My daughter neither needs nor asks to share it. As to the child, I wish no such creature in my house, and I have already refused her an asylum here. I want no such base blood as yours to rise up against me in the future, as a return for the benefits bestowed. Betty may suffer for a time, but she will get over it. Take the brat with you to your native land. I never wish to set eyes on her again myself."

Clayton would here have interfered in favour of claiming the infant, if her father could be induced to give her up; but some inexplicable feeling held him silent.

The thought of Denham's child appealing to Bettina for affection, claiming the tenderest emotions of her heart, was odious to him, and he firmly closed his lips, determined to let the father settle the matter without interference from him.

A noble, true, and high-toned man was Randolph Clayton, but he was also a man of strong prejudices, and had a thorough conviction that "blood will tell." This child, as a claimant on Bettina in the future, might not only become the cause of dissension, but, in the fulness of time, he a positive source of unhappiness to her; for if she chanced to resemble her father in mind, as she did in person, what comfort could be hoped for her to the desolate heart which now yearned so tenderly over her loss.

So he bit his lip, and listened silently to Denham's reply.

"Umph! so you refuse to have us on any terms, and I must say that you have an uncommon way of showing your affection for your own blood. Bella is your granddaughter and whenever the time comes in which anything is to be made from the relationship, I shall be sure to prove it, and claim her just rights. As to such claims as I have on my aunt, she will not ignore them—especially if I can take her a pretty pet like Bella, for she has always had a fancy for adopting a little girl."

"Do as you please about that," was the cold reply. "I choose to have nothing to do with either of you. As to the child's claims on my estate, I shall take such measures as will effectually cut her off from any interest in it. Take her away from this country, and never let me hear of either of you again. I truly believe that in cutting off all communication of any kind between her and my daughter, that I am serving Bettina's happiness and best interests."

"Her interests perhaps, but her happiness can hardly be increased by the desertion of her infant."

"It is not she who deserts, but you who steal it from her."

"I do not call it stealing to take what belongs to me; but this is idle. Are you immovable in your determination, Mr. Carr?"

Denham's tone had changed and become much more conciliatory, but the old gentleman was only more irritated at this new proof of his lack of courage. He hastily said:

"It is idle for you and me to bandy words, Gerald Denham. I am as immovable, where you are concerned, as iron, steel, adamant; and no power on earth can ever make me change towards you. From such men as you, money can buy anything. What sum will induce you to leave my daughter in peace, and never molest her again. I am willing to pay you for what I might extort without price, that I may rid myself of you with the least possible trouble to myself."

"I daresay," and the old insolence returned when convinced that nothing was to be gained by affected submission. "At how much do you value your daughter yourself, old fellow? If I put anything like the same price upon her it would impoverish

you to pay the ransom; and faith! I think she ought to be worth as much to me as she is to you."

Clayton here spoke, in deep disgust: "Why degrade yourself, Mr. Carr, by making terms with a creature like that? Turn him over to me and I will settle with him very quickly. I will give him over to his own countrymen, with such proofs of his baseness towards the cause they fought for, as still remain in my possession. They will condemn him, and give him what he merits—a quick judgment and speedy execution."

This threat, and the manner of the man who made it, alarmed Denham, and he changed his jeering tone for one of more respect.

"Do not listen to him, Mr. Carr, for I am ready to treat with you on fair terms. Give me an order on your tobacco merchant in London for a thousand pounds, payable at sight, and I will comply with such demands as you may make. I think that is fair enough, sir."

Mr. Carr nodded, silently drew forward writing materials, and wrote out such an agreement as he wished Denham to sign. He then read it aloud to him, and said:

"I will give freedom to your hands till it is signed, and then you shall have the order for the money."

"Well—well, anything to be freed from this confinement, for I am tired of it, and of my company, too."

Clayton had whispered a few words to Sam, before he left the room, and he now heard the arrival he was expecting, and opened the door leading into the yard.

A tall, strongly-made man, armed to the teeth, appeared on the threshold, and three horses prepared for travelling were visible as the light shone out, fastened to the hitching-post in the back yard.

There was the overseer of the place to whom a message had been sent to prepare for an immediate journey. Denham changed colour when the man came in and said:

"I am really to go then without exchanging a word with my wife?"

"She must not be disturbed, and you have no longer any claim on her," was the stern reply given.

Half-an-hour later he was on his way to Baltimore, sufficiently bound to prevent escape, with Clayton riding on one side and the overseer on the other, both intent on seeing him embark for his native land.

(To be Continued.)

BRIDLINGTON PRIORY.

The partial restoration of the old priory at Bridlington, said to have been founded in 1069 for canons regular of the Order of St. Augustine, by Walter de Guunt, grand nephew of William the Conqueror, is being attempted, and some £12,500 has been raised in this increasingly popular watering-place and its neighbourhood. To restore the eastern parts of the edifice and the central tower would require £150,000, but the intention is to add shapeliness and beauty to what remains and to run up the two western towers. The history of the building is interesting. After the plunder of Whitby Abbey by the Danes it was fortified with walls and ditches, and its defences were further increased about the end of the 14th century, a massive gateway in the pointed style, upwards of 100 yards westward of the church, still remaining.

In the 16th century it must have been a building of unusual magnificence. The length of the nave was 188 ft., its breadth 72 ft., its height 90 ft., length of choir about 140 ft., length of transept about 160 ft. Not a vestige of chancel or transept is now visible, and the central and two western towers have likewise disappeared.

The principal entrance is by a pointed arch, surmounted by a crocketed pinnacled, while on the north side is a beautiful porch much dilapidated, belonging to the 14th century. The western front is little less than a ruin, the north tower has no roof, and is blocked off from the interior by a hideous wall, the tower windows are built up with bricks, and the stonework insecure.

The last two girders of the Tay Bridge have been raised into position. No date has been fixed for the opening of the structure, which is upwards of two miles long. The bridge consists of eighty-five spans, thirty of which are 90 ft. above high-water level. Nearly seven years have been occupied in building the bridge, and between twenty and thirty lives have been lost during its progress. It has cost about £330,000.

ONCE UPON A TIME.

THOMAS lived once upon a time, in a land there is no need of mentioning by name, a person who was not a young prince, as my preamble seems to indicate, but an ordinary mortal, down whose papa's chimney neither good nor evil fairies came at his birth, though both seemed to have a hand in the weaving of his destiny, of which the woof was perfect and the web sadly imperfect.

He was rich; he was young, and he had a pleasant face and a warm heart, and a fine mind; but, in his youth, a nurse had dropped him from her arms to the stone floor of the court-yard, and had so hurt him that he never could be anything but a bent and distorted cripple all his life.

As a child, he had been so sheltered from every annoyance, so loved by his mother, and so much had been done to ease him from pain, that the fact had not troubled him much.

He limped about with a pleasant smile on his face as happy a child as any.

He had but to breathe a wish and it was gratified. Books, toys, music, whatever he wanted, came at his call as though the fairies had given him a wishing-cap.

If he could but have retained a child all would have been well, but, as all children must, he grew to be a man, and suddenly it dawned upon him one day that he was unlike other men; that women pitied him instead of admiring him; that all that he had was worth nothing to him, since he could never hope to have a straight back, well formed limbs, and six good feet of height; and having once fallen into this train of thought, he would have been the poorest labourer on the roadside if that labourer would have given him for his wealth and advantage his well-knit figure.

This was after his Cousin Linda had been sent to his father's care on her parents' death in a foreign country—his Cousin Linda, fresh and sweet and fair as a snow-drop. She had been in great grief at first, and he had done his best to make her happier. He read to her from his favourite volumes; he played to her the music he loved best; They had long talks; they were companions for days together; and strange, sweet emotions grew in the boy's breast. He did not understand them at first. It was not for a long while that he knew that he was in love.

Knowing it, he awoke. He stood before the glass one day and looked at himself, and tears arose to his eyes.

"No woman could ever love me," he said; "I must not dream of it." And from that moment he was changed; he sought Linda's company no more, but hid himself away from her.

"Have I angered you, Cousin Clarence?" she once asked, and he only shook his head and made no answer.

Other men were about her. Others perhaps loved her also. He began to hate them. All his tenderness turned to bitterness. He had not a kind word for anyone—he who had been always so utterly amiable.

His mother was repulsed almost rudely when she questioned him. He closed his doors against his friends, and at last he had the misery of hearing one he had offended say to another:

"I believe deformed persons are always bad tempered. I used to think Clarence an exception, but it seems I was mistaken."

"It is true," he said; "I have a deformed body, and my soul also is deformed," and he went sadly away to a lonely place where he hoped to be left to himself for awhile.

It was a river bank, shaded by tall trees, under which he laid himself down.

The waters were clear and deep; in them he saw himself reflected.

"Little hunchback," he said, with a groan, and menaced his own image with his clenched hand.

Then shame possessed him, for, looking up, he saw a tall, well-built young man gazing down upon him with a singular smile—a tall, handsome man; but the dust of the road was upon his clothes and his feet, and he carried a little knapsack on his back.

He was evidently either a poor man, or an eccentric one, who liked long tramps over weary ways.

He was not a bashful man, for while Clarence eyed him angrily, he spoke with a laugh:

"Good evening, sir. The world does not seem to please you."

"It is scarcely your affair if it does not," replied Clarence.

"I don't feel sure of that," said the other, taking a seat beside him. "I'm a curious kind of fellow,

and I should really like to know what is on your mind."

All this was very impertinent, Clarence thought, but there was that in the man's manner that did not deepen the offence. Suddenly the poor boy's heart softened.

"Would there not be something on your mind," he said, speaking as he might to a brother whom he had known all his life, "if this were your reflection instead of mine?" and he pointed to his image in the water.

"Oh," said the stranger, "I understand. I certainly have a better figure than you, and doubtless can walk farther, but you'd not change with me. You're master of that old mansion yonder, I think. You are rich. You are learned and accomplished. You have troops of friends. This is all the money I have in the world," and he tossed a coin in his hand. "I have neither house nor land; no prospects, no profession, no learning. I stand alone in the world."

"Ah, but you stand so tall and straight in it," said Clarence. "Change with you. Heaven knows I would if that were possible."

"Possible!" cried the other. "You have learning, I have none, but I know some things that you do not. It is possible; and if you would change your good fortune for my long legs and straight back, I'm ready."

"Change! why, I should be mad not to do so," said Clarence. "But what an idiot I am. You are only mocking me. Such things cannot be."

"Try it," said the other. "Take this flask, drink half the contents and give me the other, then take hands with me and say after me what I shall say, only remember—I don't want to cheat you—when you've slipped into my skin you'll be a very poor man and a very unfortunate one."

"I care nothing for that," said Clarence, "but I will be as fair with you. You'll be a little hunchback. Think of that!"

"I'm ready, if you are," said the other. He took from his breast a small flask and handed it to Clarence, who drank a portion of its contents and handed it back.

Then they joined hands, and the stranger took the hunchback's shape.

Presently Linda came along and shook hands with the hunchback, who professed to love her dearly, and Linda reciprocated his love.

His mother now approached and fondly caressed the lovers.

To be sure, the figure that stood between them was not straight or handsome; but what of that? How fond those two were of him.

The handsome fellow, leaning against the tree, felt pangs of regret and sorrow pierce his soul as the three turned away and left him alone with his new-found beauty; he saw them pass out of sight, and sunk upon the grass and hid his face with his hands.

"Oh, what a madman I have been!" he moaned. "I have cast away Linda's love—for now I see plainly that she loved me."

How long he lay in the grass he did not know; at last a hand touched his.

"Clarence," said a voice. "Clarence, you had been gone so long your mother grew anxious and sent me to see if I could find you. You are ill, Cousin Clarence?"

Then he raised his head—Linda knelt beside him.

He was lying near the river under the old oak trees, but he saw his own deformed figure in the water, and knew that the stranger and his magic flask, and the transformation that had come of the draught he swallowed, and the incantation he had uttered, had been only a dream.

Yes, he was not the handsome fellow who had been left alone and loveless to go his way.

"I am not ill, Cousin Linda," he said, softly. "I have been asleep and dreaming. I dreamt a strange dream. If you know what it was, you would be angry, perhaps. I am not dreaming now, Linda—I have a mirror there in the water that would drive away such dreams; but what I dreamt was that you loved me, Linda, as I love you."

And Linda listened.

She did not take away her hand; and now he clasped it close and looked into her eyes.

"But for the mirror yonder, I might hope that it was not a dream," he whispered.

"The water into which you look reflects the face that is dearest to me of any upon earth, and the dream is a true one, Clarence. It is not the body that we women love—it is the soul."

So there was a great wedding, and they lived happily ever after.

M. K. D.

HEALTH OF EMPLOYMENTS.

The following instructive table was prepared by direction of the Massachusetts Legislature, by which it appears that the average age of

	Years.
Gentlemen is	68
Judges	65
Farmers	64
Bank Officers	64
Coopers	58
Public Officers	57
Clergymen	56
Shipwrights	55
Hatters	54
Lawyers	54
Rowmakers	54
Blacksmiths	51
Merchants	51
Calico Printers	51
Physicians	51
Butchers	50
Carpenters	49
Masons	48
Traders	46
Tailors	44
Jewellers	44
Manufacturers	43
Bakers	43
Painters	43
Shoemakers	43
Mechanics	43
Editors	40
Musicians	39
Printers	38
Machinists	38
Teachers	34
Clerks	34
Operatives	33

GLORIA;

MARRIED IN RAGE.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE reception of visitors was the small beginning of Gloria's social life at La Fayette.

The next day other neighbours called.

In the course of a few days dinner and tea parties were given in honour of the Countess De la Vera, who soon became the belle of the neighbourhood.

At length Miss De Crespiigny herself gave a large party in return for the many that had been given to her and her niece.

This was a gathering of the élite of the town, and all seemed to vie with each other in showing honour to the young and beautiful Portuguese countess; for so they chose to consider the little lady.

All the reserve and discretion of Gloria could not prevent her from becoming the object of warm admiration, and extravagant hopes on the part of some of the young men. These sentiments, when they were clearly manifested by any of the habitués of the house of her aunt, gave Gloria great pain, and put her in extreme perplexity.

At all times she tried to discourage especial attention from gentlemen and to warn off any word or look approaching a declaration of love, or a proposal of marriage.

At this party, given by Miss De Crespiigny, the crisis, in one case, came.

Captain Wilkinson had not fallen in love with Gloria at first sight, indeed, but had at every meeting admired her more, until, almost imperceptibly, he began to love her, then to adore, then to worship, finally to feel that the happiness of his whole life depended on her.

He had long sought an opportunity of declaring his sentiments and making his proposal to her; but she had discouraged his attentions in every way in which she could do so without positive rudeness and unkindness, of which her good heart was quite incapable—and she intuitively shrank from and avoided the crisis that she feared was coming for a long time.

But at length, as I said, it came at Miss De Crespiigny's party.

Gloria had always managed to keep near some lady friend, and so had avoided all personal interviews that might have taken an embarrassing turn.

Late in the evening of this occasion, she was sitting beside old Mdm. Stanley, when Major Stanley came up to her, leaning on his gold-headed

cane with one hand, and resting on the arm of Captain Wilkinson.

"Come, madame," he said to his wife, "If La Comtesse will excuse you, I have a word to say."

And he led the old lady off, and left Captain Wilkinson, who quietly slipped into her vacated seat.

Gloria felt that all this had been effected by a concerted action between old Major Stanley and Captain Wilkinson.

She impulsively arose to leave her place, though the action was most impolite and unlike herself.

He took her hand and stopped her, looked imploringly in her face, and said, in a voice shaking with his strong agitation:

"For mercy's sake! for Heaven's sake! Countess, let me speak to you!"

His voice was so imploring, his face so pale, his eyes so agonised with the suspense of an almost hopeless passion, that Gloria grew sick at heart as she looked upon him.

"I may not, I must not listen to you, Captain Wilkinson," she answered, gently attempting to withdraw her hand.

"But I love you! Oh! I love you, Countess! You have my heart—my life! Do not trample on them!" he breathed in deep, vibrating tones.

"Oh, I am very sorry for this!" said Gloria, sinking back in her seat, and resigned now to having an explanation with her ardent but mistaken suitor. "I am very sorry for this! Oh, I fear I am very much to be blamed for this, Captain Wilkinson. I do most humbly beg your pardon for having led you into this error!"

"Ah, lady, what is it that you mean? You never gave me the slightest encouragement! That I confess. I have hoped against hope! Ah, let me still hope, Countess," he pleaded.

"I cannot."

"Ah! do not say so!"

"Captain Wilkinson—"

"Do not drive me to desperation, I implore you—"

"Listen to me, sir—"

"Give me a little time, a little hope to save me from—"

"Captain Wilkinson, you must hear me now!—"

"I will not hear you speak my sentence of death."

"My friend," said Gloria, in a very gentle voice. He became very quiet at once.

"Look at me."

He obeyed, and lifted his eyes full of prayer to her face, for she had just risen and was standing over him.

"Now listen to me," she continued.

"I hear," he breathed in low tones.

"I am a married woman."

He started up and stared at her in incredulous consternation.

"You—married!"

"Yes."

"Why—you are but a child," he breathed, dropping back on his seat.

"I am a married child, then."

"But—every one believed you to be a young countess in your own right."

"I am a countess by birth, or would be so in countries where such titles are good for anything. They are of no value here."

"I neither know nor care! I cared nothing for your rank, your title,—I cared only for you. Married! Great Heaven—married!"

"Yes, listen to me and be a man. I was married last winter to Mr. David Lindsay, of Liverpool. My husband is detained in the north, by circumstances into which it is not necessary to go at present. I am very much attached to him, and he loves me and confides in me. Now you know, Captain Wilkinson, what a great mistake you have made."

"Lord! Have pity on my soul!" cried the young man, in a voice of anguish that rang for weeks through the conscience-shaken soul of Gloria.

"Oh, pardon me! For Heaven's sake, pardon me if I have led you, as I must have led you, into this grievous error," pleaded Gloria, with tears in her eyes.

"No, no, you never led me into this! You never gave me the slightest encouragement! You never led me into this! My own folly led me! Nothing more!" he answered, earnestly.

"Yet say you pardon me! Oh, I feel so guilty! Say you pardon me, dear Captain Wilkinson," said Gloria, with clasped hands and streaming eyes.

"Heaven bless you, countess! Heaven for ever bless you!" he breathed in earnest, fervent tones, as he caught and pressed her hand, dropped it and hurried away from her side.

She never saw him again.

She arose from her seat, and looking around and seeing that no one observed her, she stole away to her own room and threw herself upon the sofa in a passion of tears.

Gloria suffered with every one who suffered. And now she blamed herself severely for the unhappiness she had caused Captain Wilkinson.

She did not return to the ball room again that night.

Indeed, the company now began to disperse.

Gloria arose and hastily undressed herself, locked both her doors, turned off the gas and got into bed, to save herself from being interrupted by a domiciliary visit from Miss De Crespiigny or Philippa.

Her heart was troubled with pity and her conscience with compunction; but in the lone watches of that night, while her self-examination and self-reproach were going on, she came to a fixed resolution that she would not appear in society again under what she called false colours.

She must be known as a married woman.

She would tell her Aunt Agrippina so in the morning.

Love was the most sacred gift one human being could give another.

No man should be beguiled of the precious treasure of his heart by any false appearances in her. Of that she fully determined.

To have been once the cause of such unhappiness was quite enough.

She must never be so again.

So resolving, she at length prayed and fell asleep.

Overcome by fatigue, she slept soundly through the remainder of the night.

The next morning Gloria arose late and was the last one to make her appearance in the breakfast-room, where Miss De Crespiigny and Philippa were already waiting for her.

"How pale you are, my dear. Are you not well to-day?" inquired Miss Agrippina.

"Yes, thanks, aunt, but I have not been used to late hours," answered Gloria, as they all took seats at the table, and Miss De Crespiigny rang for the coffee.

"I tried your door when I came upstairs to say good-night, but it was fast, and so I supposed you had gone to bed," said Philippa, as she chipped the shell of her egg.

"Yes," answered Gloria, indifferently.

"I tried it again this morning, but it was still fast, so I thought you were asleep."

"I was."

"And now, Madame Gloria, I wish you to explain why, for the first time, you fastened the communicating door between our rooms? Were you afraid I would enter in the night and rob and murder you?"

"Yes," said the young lady, who had heard a question without taking in its sense.

Philippa and Miss De Crespiigny also stared at their companion in blank amazement.

"Is the girl losing her senses? Wasn't there a suspicion of insanity in her mother's family?" was the question in the mind of both. "She has given at least one strong proof of an unsound mind in her hasty marriage with David Lindsay," was the thought under the question.

"Madame Gloria, do I look like a midnight assassin?" inquired Philippa, in a very pathetic tone.

"Why, what are you talking of, Philippa?" demanded the young lady.

"You said you fastened the door between our rooms last night because you were afraid that I should come in in the night and rob and murder you."

"Indeed I never said or dreamed of saying such a thing! You must be out of your senses, Philippa!"

"Ah, that is the way with lunatics. They always think everybody mad except themselves. Didn't she say that, Miss De Crespiigny?"

"I think, my dear Philippa, you put the case rather too strongly. You asked the countess why she fastened the door, and whether she were afraid you might enter her room to rob or murder her, and she answered, absently, 'Yes,' perhaps not paying much attention to the question," said Miss Agrippina, who had taken a little time to think and to come to a just conclusion.

Gloria laughed a little and said:

"I did not know what she was talking about, I suppose, and so I answered at random. But, my dear, the reason why I fastened my door was a very natural and inoffensive precaution—that we might both go to bed and go to sleep, instead of sitting up to gossip all the rest of the night and early morning."

"A wise precaution. But my dear Gloria, several of our guests looked for you to bid you good-night before they left; especially Miss Wilkinson, who



[A NEW ADJUTANT.]

seemed very anxious to find you. But you had slipped away."

"I hope there was no breach of etiquette—no offence in that?" said Gloria, deprecatingly.

"Oh, no; I was on hand—so was Philippa. Miss Wilkinson feels very badly. Her brother's regiment is ordered abroad."

"Ah, indeed! that is news. When does the regiment go?" inquired Miss Agrippina.

"This morning. The colonel has resigned his commission, and poor Major Stanley, who is next in rank, has the temporary command until some other officer be sent down."

Gloria heard all this talk without making any remark.

"Well, my dears," said Miss De Crespiigny, as they arose from the table, "this is near the first of June. We must begin to think of going northward. I like to be at Scarborough soon after the opening, so as to get the full benefit of the season."

"Has Madame De Crespiigny and her party yet sailed?" inquired Gloria; and this was the first occasion on which she had felt any curiosity, and the first question she had asked in relation to her uncle's family, since the day of Miss De Crespiigny's arrival at Wolf's Gap, nearly three months before.

Nor had the old lady volunteered any information on the subject. She had received and answered letters from Liverpool once or twice every week. That Gloria knew; but she knew nothing of their contents.

Now, however, a certain anxiety seized her, lest there should be some change in Madame De Crespiigny's programme for the summer, and some danger of meeting that party, augmented by Colonel De Crespiigny himself, at their haunts at Scarborough.

"My dear, I suppose they have gone by this time. They were to have sailed last Saturday. This is Wednesday. I expect to hear from them to-day—in fact, to receive their last letter before sailing," said the old lady, while they were passing through the hall, to disperse about their various morning avocations.

Even as she spoke a footman came in with the letter-bag and respectfully handed it to his mistress.

"Come, now, into the parlour, for a moment, and we will overhaul this," said Miss De Crespiigny, turning, not to the long and elegant drawing-room on

the right, but to a neat, cool, little sitting-room on the left of the hall, where she sank upon a chintz-covered sofa, and taking the bag upon her lap, opened it.

The first letter she took out was inclosed in a black-edged envelope, sealed with black, and postmarked St. Ingoes, and directed to herself.

She did not know the handwriting, but she concluded that it was from David Lindsay, and it gave her much uneasiness, inspiring vague suspicions, so she slipped it into her pocket to be read privately when she should be alone and safe from all interruption.

The next letter was from Liverpool, in the well-known characters of her sister-in-law, Madame De Crespiigny.

There was nothing else in the bag except newspapers.

These she took out and gave to the girls to look over while she herself opened and read her relative's letter.

Gloria was soon deep in the paper, and Philippa in another one, when both were very much startled by an exclamation from Miss De Crespiigny.

"Dear—dear—dear—dear!" said the old lady, "this is really very unexpected and annoying!"

"What is it, Aunt Agrippina?" inquired Gloria, uneasily.

"Why, my dear, they are not going away after all. They are going to join us."

"Oh!" exclaimed Gloria, all her fears realised in that alarming news.

But Philippa's lovely face suddenly lighted up with a look of strange, incomprehensible surprise and delight.

"You see," continued Miss De Crespiigny, with the open letter still in her hand and her eyes fixed upon it, "she says that the voyage must be given up, for the reason that Colonel De Crespiigny's mind revolted from the project of going abroad as soon as he was well enough to competently consider the subject. He declared that a contemplative tour over ground that he had so recently travelled with his erring ward would suggest painful associations and make him more unhappy. That what he needed was a total change in life—active, stirring, incessant, absorbing duty."

While Miss Agrippina spoke, Philippa's eyes were fixed upon her face with the most open, undisguised expression of admiration and approval.

"And he expects to find that sort of life in Scarborough. I presume, in racing, billiard playing and so forth," said Gloria, sarcastically.

"Oh, no, he is going to Scarborough with his mother and sisters," exclaimed Miss De Crespiigny, looking up.

Philippa's bright face darkened with disappointment; but Gloria's lighted up with relief.

"Oh, no! He heard of the troubles on the Continent, and he went straight to the War Department and offered his valuable services. Now, as his mother writes, Colonel De Crespiigny's record during the Crimean war gave him a prompt hearing. The moment seemed very opportune, too, it seems, for a Colonel McElrath had just resigned on the eve of marching; so Marcel De Crespiigny, who has had a good deal of successful experience out there, received his commission and was appointed to the command of the — Regiment of Cavalry."

"Why, that is the same one to which Captain Wilkinson and Major Stanley belong, and so we may expect him here, at any time, even to-day," exclaimed Philippa, brightening up again, while Gloria darkened.

"No, my love. Not so. He is to proceed first with a reinforcement of troops and stores, and thence down through the plains to join his regiment," Miss De Crespiigny explained.

Once more Philippa's face gloomed, and Gloria's brightened. It was as if a shifting cloud passed and repassed continually from one star to another, veiling and revealing their light in turns.

"There, girls, that is all. Madame De Crespiigny, my sister-in-law, and her daughter will join us at Scarborough, and add very much to our enjoyment, no doubt, as we shall to theirs, I hope."

And with these words the lady arose and went up to her room, where she locked the door to secure herself from observation before sitting down to read David Lindsay's letter.

As she broke the black seal a creeping fear—she knew not what—impending trouble came over her.

As she read the lines within, this shapeless fear took form and colour.

"Great Heaven!" she breathed. "I had rather he had been the poor young fisherman we thought him. This must be hidden from Gloria, that she may be saved."

(To be Continued.)



[THE LOST LOCKET.]

WHO DID IT?

OR,
THE WARD'S SECRET.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LOST LOCKET.

"And oh, her beauty was fair to see;
But still and steadfast was her eye
Such beauty hard may never declare,
For there was no pride nor passion there;
And the soft desire of resident's eye
In that wild face could never be seen."

"PLEASE, sir, Mitchell wants to see you when you have finished breakfast," said Forrest, the butler at The Wilderness.

"Very well," was the brief reply. "I suppose," Mr. Leclerc added, turning to his daughter, "that it is about that fancy of yours, Pauline, as to having the 'Lady's Garden' laid out differently. I know the old fellow was opposed to the alteration."

"It is very impertinent of him, papa, when I wish it," returned the girl. "It will be such an improvement, I am sure. It is so wild and purposeless as it is, do you not think so, Mr. Waldegrave?" she asked of her supposed lover.

Reginald shrugged his shoulders.

"I scarcely venture to give an opinion as to the real beauty of it," he said. "I am by no means up in landscape gardening, nor do I quite comprehend what change is in the question. Miss Devaux is a much better referee on such subjects."

"Oh, it is a matter of taste, of course. At present the garden is simply turfed with a narrow, paved path and has a balustrade, as you know. I want it laid out in beds full of flowers and winding walks, and one or two garden chairs and sheltered alcoves," returned Pauline, rather poutingly.

"And what does Miss Devaux say to the idea?" asked Reginald, with an unconscious softness in his tone.

Viola shrank, as it seemed, from the reference, but if she did speak it must infallibly be the truth, and she answered, gently:

"I am terribly conservative, I fear. I do so much prefer what is old; and the garden, as it stands, represents the past."

Pauline looked doubtfully from her lover to her father.

It was evident that she was far from satisfied at the response. But still, she dared not altogether express her annoyance, fettered as she was by her promise to Reginald, and also her secret consciousness that Viola was the right heiress of the estate and its belongings.

"Well, I really can scarcely decide, were it to depend on me," said Reginald. "If I did lean to either side of the argument, it might, I confess, be that of Miss Devaux. There is a charm in the antique, to my thinking, which overbalances all besides."

Pauline's brow clouded visibly.

Mr. Leclerc's reflected every change in the mood of his darling—his worshipped idol.

"I will go and see Mitchell," he said; "it may perhaps be on something else he wants to say to me. And I can but defer my reply till the knotty point is deliberately considered."

And he left the room, quickly followed by Viola.

The ward never willingly made a third in the presence of Pauline and her presumed lover. There was something that forbade the uncomfortable "odd" number on her part.

Perhaps it was from the certainty that at once too little or too much was demanded of her in the colloquy. Whether "maquis" or "de trop" she could herself have hardly defined. Mr. Leclerc was absent some quarter of an hour or more.

Reginald was calmly hunting round the room for some abstracting object of interest. He had certainly no actual wish for an entirely private dialogue such as is the unintelligible but most valued privilege of lovers.

"This is a wonderful bit of china, Pauline," he said, taking up a "blue" Dresden vase of rare beauty.

"Probably. I do not profess to know more about china than you do about gardens, Mr. Waldegrave. You had better ask Miss Devaux."

"Viola Devaux has a keen sense of the antique. I can scarcely doubt what would be her reply," he said, coldly.

"Of course you are well instructed as to her tastes and wishes, I do not doubt," was the jealous response.

Poor Pauline!

She was not evil-natured. But it was more than

trying to her to perceive the treachery, as it might be termed, of her whilome lover.

He had either not time or inclination to answer when the door again opened and Mr. Leclerc entered.

There was evident annoyance on his brow as he walked hastily forward. His very step betrayed the disturbance of his spirits.

"I have some property of yours, as I believe, here, Waldegrave," he said; "and, from its condition, it can scarcely have been lost long enough for you to have missed it. Is not this something belonging to your watch appendage?"

He produced a beautiful, singularly carved locket as he spoke.

It was massive in form, but the design and the carving were decidedly Oriental.

It was unmistakable when once seen. And to "make assurance doubly sure," it had "R. W." and his crest engraved on it.

"I own the impeachment, sir," he said, coolly, though Pauline fancied that a slight flush did dye his cheeks at the first sight of the bauble. "And per consequence, my debt of obligation to the finder whoever it might be," he added, taking out his purse.

"You need not trouble yourself on that score, Mr. Waldegrave. It was the head gardener, Mitchell, who found it, and he is well nigh as much above reward as myself. Are you not anxious to know where it was found?"

"Scarcely. It is enough that it is found," was the careless response.

Mr. Leclerc paused a moment.

"I told Mitchell, my love, that you would go and give him your final orders," he said to his daughter; "you can consult with Viola and settle it between you. I care little about such trifles."

Pauline obeyed. Mr. Leclerc waited till she had disappeared, then he faced Reginald sternly.

"Mr. Waldegrave, I do not wish to suspect, and still less to have my suspicions verified," he said, gravely; "but there are some very singular circumstances attending the finding of that locket."

"Indeed. It is certainly a welcome fact that it is restored," remarked the young man, with apparent carelessness. "I should have been much annoyed to lose it, as it is a species of heirloom."

"Which, as we are bound to suppose, would have been doubly regretted had it been unwillingly lost," observed Mr. Leclerc, significantly. "Are you

aware that it was found—as, of course, it must have been lost—in this same Lady's Garden, immediately adjoining to my ward's, Miss Devaux's, apartment?"

Reginald flushed with either consciousness or resentment at the tone.

"Possibly. I am not responsible for where it was found. It by no means follows that it was lost there," he returned.

"It is the natural inference, you will allow," returned Mr. Leclerc.

"Perhaps; if servants are always to be relied upon," said Reginald, carelessly.

"I scarcely think that anyone would take the trouble to carry the bauble from one place to another, in order to have it discovered there, instead of at once claiming the reward that might very well be given," said the elder gentleman, coolly. "In any case it certainly is but too undoubted a fact. First, the trinket was certainly not lost till this morning, as there was a heavy storm—that would decidedly have steeped it in wet—last night, and secondly, Reginald Waldegrave, I regret to say, that from the facts that have come to my knowledge, there is no doubt you were on that spot this very morning! And, what is more damaging at once to you, and, I fear, to another member of this family, you were not alone there," continued Mr. Leclerc, meaningly.

Reginald started angrily round.

"Am I to be watched and called to account in this manner, and by your servants, during my visit here, Mr. Leclerc?" he said. "Then I had better terminate it as quickly as possible."

He had even greater advantage than he knew in this proposal.

Even he was scarcely aware how entirely Pauline was wrapt up in him, nor the complete dominion she exercised over her father's affections.

But he did see that the host's face changed suddenly at the words.

"I had rather you could explain the very peculiar and annoying circumstance, than leave us in unpleasantness and vexation," returned Mr. Leclerc. "I am even now inclined to hope there may be some mistake or treachery about it. If you, as a man of honour and a gentleman, can assure me that you were not in the garden this morning, that a young female, certainly dressed in Viola Devaux's clothes, was not there also at that untimely hour, I would strive to believe you against the word even of those who I do not think had any reason for deception. Can you do this, Reginald Waldegrave?"

Reginald was certainly a gentleman in birth and training.

It might perfectly be presumed that he had the code of morals in his order.

That he did not reply at once to this adjuration was decidedly against the idea that he could honourably deny the accusation.

But the next words were at the best a faint refutation.

"I distinctly refuse to degrade myself by such a proceeding, Mr. Leclerc," he said, firmly. "It is improbable that I should prevail on a young lady of Miss Devaux's birth and character to give me a clandestine meeting at such an hour, even were we openly betrothed to each other, and the whole affair appears to me such a double-dyed insult that unless you at once drop these foolish queries I shall act on my first impulse and leave your house without delay. You are of course free to act as you please. My resolution is taken," he said, retiring a step or two as if in confirmation of his threat.

Paul Leclerc was baffled.

He had, to say the truth, a very strong belief in the tale of his servants. He more than suspected Reginald's predilection if not affection for Viola.

He could have laid him prostrate on the floor for the very suspicion. But if so, what would become of Pauline, his worshipped, his only idol. Would she not pale and fade away and die, perhaps with words of bitter reproach on the father on whose head she might well lay her terrible sorrow.

Such thoughts rushed through his mind as he paused for the reply he should make.

"Waldegrave," he said, "you must do me the justice to say that this has been a most unexpected revelation to me. I did no more imagine such a thing possible than I thought evil of my own child. But what could I think or answer when the facts were brought before me, and even now I cannot see any feasible explanation of them, except from your own lips."

"Take my advice, Mr. Leclerc, and do not trouble yourself for once," said the young man, coolly. "If I wish to court and win your ward depend on it you will never hinder it by such surveillance as this. If not, you need have no fears on that head. I presume that Miss Leclerc and Miss Devaux are equally suitable for me to attempt to

win if I am so disposed. If you trust me with your charges it is equally rational to imagine that you do also consider me within the pale for their choice. Best leave the matter to ourselves, my good sir. Love laughs at all this folly. He will assert himself if he exists, and will not be coerced where he does not reside of his own free will."

It was certainly an insolent coolness that could warrant such a speech, and in any other case it would have been fatal to the speaker remaining another hour at The Wilderness.

Mr. Leclerc could scarcely control his indignation, but he heard the voice of his darling at the moment, and he determined to gain time.

"This is not our first conversation on the subject, Mr. Waldegrave, I would fain hope it may be the last. Pardon my saying that if you have any such right as you imply there can be no position more favourable than yours for coming to some decision. You owe it to all parties to do so as soon as possible, and I shall certainly expect some more distinct avowal of your intentions in a short space from this time. It is my bounden duty to exact it, and if I did not feel sincere confidence and regard for you it would have been done long since. After this warning you cannot complain. Still I request you to confide in me as I do in you, my young friend," he said, with a warm grasp of the hand, and a pleading look that might well soften the words.

CHAPTER IX.

VIOLA'S VISIT.

"Do for the present what you can,
Keep coming good in view;
What's done 'tis profitless to scan
What may be done's for you."

"Mrs. Viola, would it be too much to ask of you if you would go and see poor Mrs. Gilbert?" asked the housekeeper, Mrs. Goodlake, taking on her the privilege she but rarely used of coming into the apartments of the young ward, who was now in a great measure independent of her care and attention.

"Who is she—and what is the matter with her, Goodlake?" asked Viola, gently. "You may be sure that I will be too happy and willing to do anything that you wish, if that is of any use or comfort, dear old Goody."

And the girl settled herself on a low settee, and looked up with all the simplicity of a child at the mature dependant of the family.

"Her mother nursed your father, as I have often heard, Miss Viola," was the response. "It was long, long years since, and as you may suppose, the mother wasn't so very young at the time. Any way, it was the truth, and ever since you came the poor thing has been always hankering to get a speech and sight of you. She's very ill, they say, something of a cancer or abscess, or what will certainly carry her off before very long. And she's getting worse, and as she feels less able to do anything as she's been used to, it's quite natural she'll remember the past. And it's for that she's so anxious not to go to the grave without setting eyes on your face, nor hearing your voice, all to herself, as one may say."

Viola would have willingly flown at the moment to the sick woman.

But it was all but impossible then. It was just at the inevitable hour of the late afternoon tea. Her absence would be remarked, questions would be asked.

And all that she most desired to accomplish would be baffled by any haste to obey the summons.

"I will go directly after breakfast, Goodlake, there is never anything to do then and I shall not be missed. Can I take her anything? Is she at all badly off?" she asked, earnestly.

"Take her your own sweet face and kindly voice and that is all she will ask, Miss Viola," was the response. "I do believe you are like the Devaux, to judge from their likenesses in the picture gallery. And that is quite enough to make Edith Gilbert feast her eyes on your features. If you'll go in the morning I'll see that no one will be the wiser, and then when you've once seen her you'll see for yourself what she's like, you can go again or not at your pleasure."

There was truth in the suggestion.

Viola was reluctant to defer the first kindly action she had been asked to fulfil since her arrival at The Wilderness, among those whom she could not but consider as her own people.

Now there was some prospect of hearing a set words of the past, of hearing tidings of her father and her mother amplified by the lips of one who had known them from their birth, of questioning all the

minor details that are so dear to the ear and the heart of kindred in blood.

She only wondered at the omission.

Yet how could she have divined the existence of this interesting claimant on her, unless specially laid before her.

She could but strive to atone by more frequent visits for the involuntary delay.

The evening and the night passed away more slowly than was their wont.

She was eager for the moment to arrive of her important visit, that, for the present, was more interesting to her than a presentation at Court.

Her appetite totally failed her in the interval, and Reginald Waldegrave seemed to be both surprised and grieved at the change.

"You are ill. The thunderstorm has been too much for you; and yet you didn't seem alarmed," he said to her, in a low voice.

"Thank you, I am perfectly well. I only am longing for exercise. I have been keeping at home too much, perhaps, lately for the life I have been accustomed to," she replied.

"How do you mean? What would you do?" he asked.

"Take a long ride this afternoon. It will do me a world of good," she said. "I, and Roberts, and Rollo. Then we shall be free to go and come as we like."

"May I accompany you? It is not safe for you to be alone."

"Certainly not. You would put yourself and me in trammels. I would not dream of it," she answered, firmly.

"You are cruel."

"No; only wise."

"Are you sincere?"

"I hope so."

"That is, you will not allow me to ride either at your side nor within call?"

"I will not."

"It must be as you please. Only I shall wait anxiously for your return," he said, softly. "You will never comprehend how wrapt up I feel in your movements and your well being."

If she wished it. She did not dare.

The girl knew little, and cared less for the man whom she had ever looked on as the suitor of Pauline.

What was he to her?

His most pointed though veiled attentions to herself she only presumed to be addressed to Miss Leclerc's friend.

Her heart was so utterly untouched—at least by him—an' her vanity, if she had any, was certainly not flattered by the devotion of one whom she was not anxious should concern himself about her, and whose homage was due to another and more willing object.

She hastened away before he had time to ask more; she flew to her room, and rapidly prepared for her intended visit.

Mrs. Goodlake had given her directions as to the invalid's residence, and with light foot and eager heart she tripped away to the spot.

"I may come in, may I not?" she said, tapping at the door of the cottage, and in a few minutes she was sitting at the bedside of the sufferer.

"This is good—very good," said Mrs. Gilbert, her eyes gleaming with evident pleasure at the visit. "It is like her, the dear, sweet lady, whom I remember as a child, though she so soon died afterwards—at least, so they said, poor dear."

"Of whom do you speak?" said Viola, gently seating herself at the bedside.

"Of your father's sister, who was brought up with him and Mr. Cecil, like three flowers on one stem, as one may see at The Wilderness," said the woman. "I expect you don't know much about it, as you were not born nor bred here like one of the family; and more's the pity it will not be yours, as it should be."

"But what is there to know? What did happen?" asked the girl, quickly.

"Well, it's a sad tale enough, that I'm not over fond of telling; but it's different to you, Miss Viola, and it's not a long one in the main. It's just this, that Miss Viola—for she'd the same name as you—and it's just a proof as well that your father didn't forget the old name. Well, you see, she was the only sister of Mr. Roy and your father, who were the only sons, and the last males of the family of Devaux."

"Then so soon as old Mr. Devaux died, leaving Miss Viola to Mr. Roy's care, he was like a lover and brother to her. But I don't believe, from all I've heard, that she was very fond of her elder brother, being more the age of Mr. Cecil, your father. And Mr. Roy certainly was jealous of him and of anyone who wanted to marry Miss Viola, and there was a deal of unpleasantness between them, and the money run short, and their affairs

went wrong, and with it their tempers, and so it was that Mr. Cecil, your father, Miss Viola, did, as was believed, sell his birthright, and went off to seek his fortune, at least, so they say, and it looked very like it, I must say, for we never heard of him, no, not till it was to be sold, you see, and the strangers came to the old place, bringing you, thank Heaven, with them."

"And what became of Miss Viola—I mean of my poor aunt?" said the young girl.

"I don't know. She went away," was the shrinking answer.

It was one that forbade further comment on the young girl's part.

She did not come to question, she came to soothe and sympathise with an old dependant of the family.

And she turned with evident reluctance and self denial to the task.

"Do you suffer much?" she asked, gently.

"Yes, of late. I do not think it will be for long," she said. "I feel so thankful to have seen your face before I die. It is like a breath of youth—a memory of the past—to see your features, Miss Viola. Yes, the same name and the same face and voice—how it runs in the blood! And she might have been a happy wife and mother, had Heaven so willed it. We always believed that Sir Charles Molynaux wanted her, and it would have been the best for her, if she could have thought it—but who could bind the heart when it went counter to the place and to precedence?"

Viola's curiosity was once more raised to the highest pitch.

She felt certain that some mystery was attached to the fate of her aunt and namesake and prototype.

But it was the very reason why she should not pry into its secrets, unless they were patent to the world.

Better be ignorant of them than possess what would be a partial and untrustworthy knowledge, which would but make her nervous and fearful as to the veiled and hidden past.

She addressed herself to the more congenial and safe task of inquiring closely into Mrs. Gilbert's position and requirements.

And though there was certainly by no means abject or pressing poverty, yet she found it to be possible to ameliorate in many respects her condition, by the gift of small comforts and luxuries, and by reading to her the consoling word that alone can support and cheer a dying sinner.

She remained so long as she dare take the time from the usual morning engagements. And then promising to come again she took a kindly leave of the invalid, and set off on her return home.

She chose what was the most secluded if not the shortest path to The Wilderness. She was gradually becoming familiar with the country round in her early walks and rides far more so than Pauline, whose explorations were confined to more conventional expeditions.

So she fearlessly entered a wood that was one of the most sheltered and favourite spots in that sea girt coast, and sauntered through its paths resolved to atone for the delay after emerging from the pleasant wood.

She had never met anyone there in the few times she had sought its shelter, but ere she had gone far on this occasion she distinctly heard steps not far from the path that she was pursuing.

It was too late to retreat since she had by this time advanced about midway in the woody plantation.

So as she had no real cause to fear any danger she went quickly on, albeit perhaps her heart throbbed somewhat quicker, and her eyes gazed eagerly round to catch the first glimpse of the new-comer.

It was a masculine step, of that she was soon assured, and one that bore traces rather of the springing lightness of these accustomed to more trained exercise and easy gait than the heavier tramp of the sons of toil.

Then it came nearer still.

Another moment and the object was in sight, and soon her hand was pressed in that of Neville Grantley.

"I never thought of meeting you here," she said, with unfeigned surprise.

"And most certainly I still less dreamed of seeing you here and alone," he replied. "It is a most unexpected-for happiness."

They had come to understand each other now, even without one word of spoken love. They knew that each delighted in the society of the other—that there was sympathy and confidence such as existed with no other.

She did not take these words as conventional phrases, nor as dangerous impositions. And her own sweet face revealed what her lips did not venture to speak.

It was nevertheless a dangerous opportunity for

both. It was well nigh more than the self restraint of youth could be expected to bear when the heart is full and warm, and the sights and sounds around you dispose to love and to happiness.

He looked at the fair girl as he walked at her side, and the perplexity came over him as to what was the best, and the frankest, and the most honourable course to pursue.

He felt certain that Viola must comprehend his feelings; he guessed with mingled hope and fear that her own heart responded to that of his unconfessed love.

Was it not a lack of duty and honour on his part were he to leave her in a state of doubt and uncertainty as to his actual intentions.

Was it not a true, manly proceeding to tell her the simple, undisguised truth, to confess how well and deeply he loved her, while yet unable to prefer openly his pretensions to her hand.

The heart is undoubtedly a sad deceiver. There can be little controversy or hesitation as to that truth.

And Neville Grantley's inclinations might probably have a share in the arguments that appeared to him so plausible and unanswerable. In any case the idea prevailed, whether for good or evil.

"Viola," he said, suddenly and softly; "sweet Viola, my beautiful, my worshipped one! Do you not, can you not comprehend what I would say if I dare. Viola, may I speak plainly?—will you listen indulgently?" he said, in a firmer accent, as he perceived her look of half alarmed happiness at the words.

"Yes," she said, softly. "Only—say the frank truth, Mr. Grantley."

He shook his head reproachfully.

"Neville—call me Neville, Viola, or I cannot venture to go on; I cannot believe that you feel for me as I would wish, and as perhaps I should not dare to hope."

"Tell me," she repeated, "tell me, Neville."

"Thanks," he said. "Thanks, my beloved. Now I can go on. Viola, did I not believe that you were superior to most of your sex, that you would do justice, that you would trust and acquit one you loved and esteemed of any wilful wrong, I dare not test you as I am about to do. But unless I am most cruelly mistaken in you I need not fear misconception when I tell you all, frankly and truly, as if you were my sister, my friend, as well as my chosen, my idolised love."

There was silence for a few minutes, only broken by the loud song of the birds, the rustle of the trees, the murmur of a distant brook. Ah, if they had been humble cottagers how different would have been their feelings and their fate.

Yet they might perhaps scarcely have appreciated the full beauty of the scene, or thrilled with the sweet, happy consciousness of love and sympathy like that youthful pair.

"I will trust you then, Viola. I will place myself in your hands," returned Neville. "When I first saw your sweet face you gained my heart. You were so fair, so good, so noble and brave, that you more than realised my fondest views. But then, I knew that I was in a great measure a dependant on Sir Aldebrande."

"I believed myself to be his nephew, his natural heir, and that it would be but a matter of time and patience to win his consent to my betrothal to a suitable bride, and that there could not be any wrong or danger in my winning your love if I could be happy enough to deserve it. Now I know otherwise."

"He tells me that I am the son of a relative, not his blood nephew, and he has refused me any aid, save in a profession I detest, and for which I have no ability to succeed, Viola. I will get work in that or aught else that would enable me to claim you one day for my bride."

"I will ask nothing from you but that you will tell me you could be content to be my wife and that you would not insist on riches and distinctions such as you might readily command. I wish for no promises, no bond on your part. You shall be free as air once after giving that avowal. I only desire that you should know I have not been false, that I have not striven to win and then left you with unconfessed love in my heart, and, perhaps, if I dare think it, the idea of unworthily-bestowed affection on yours."

He ceased the low, slow, yet fluent words that Viola drank in like summer rain on the parched ground.

The girl's eyes were downcast, yet there was a soft rich bloom on her cheek, and a quivering in her eyelids that seemed as if the moist tears were trying to load them with their bright drops.

But when Neville went on to say: "If I were but worthy—if I could—but openly claim you as an honourable man should," and his voice sounded sad and humble, as if he were really distressed and

doubtful at her silence—then her tongue was un-locked.

"Neville, I am content—I will trust you—I will wait, and I will be true to you."

It was too much.

He could not resist that look and tones, and the unlooked-for, gushing happiness they brought. He looked into her beautiful eyes, with their candid, clear, loving depths; he touched her sweet lips, and drew her to his breast in an uncontrollable gust of passionate gratitude; though it did not long prevail over his sense of duty and honour and respect.

He released her quickly from his embrace with one more, almost reverent, kiss.

"Thanks, thanks, dearest. If my whole life can repay the trust you shall not find it shall be thrown away. I will pray for you, love you, devote my every thought and energy to the task of becoming more worthy of you, and placing myself in a position to claim your frank and free promise; but still I will never reproach you if you do weary of the waiting, or prefer some happier and more prosperous man to poor Neville Grantley."

"That I will never do; never," she murmured, "now that I know you do love me, Neville."

It was a blessed compact, a moment such as does not occur twice in a lifetime. But it was soon disturbed.

There was a sudden break through the trees that skirted the path they were slowly journeying, and Reginald Waldegrave stood before them, his eyes flashing, angrily and his lips curling with bitter, scornful resentment.

(To be Continued.)

THE FORREST HOUSE; OR EVERARD'S REPENTANCE.

CHAPTER XLIX.

EVERARD felt that he could not write to Rosalie his real opinion of her newly-found brother; but he said in his letter that if her brother was all she represented him to be, he was glad for her sake that she had found him, and that he hoped always to be friendly with her friends and those that were kind to her.

"But if he were the archangel himself," he added "I should find it hard to forgive him for having removed from my grasp what I miss more and more every day of my life, and long for with an intensity which masters my reason and drives me almost to despair. But whatever I may feel toward him, Rosalie, I shall treat him well for your sake, and if you can find any comfort in his society, take it, and be as happy as you can."

To Dr. Matthewson he wrote in a little different strain. He did not believe in the man, and though he made an effort to be civil he showed his distrust and aversion in every line. If the doctor had repented, he was glad of it, but wished the repentance had come in time to have saved him from a life-long trouble. A boy's horsewhipping was a small matter for a man to avenge so terribly, he said, and then added:

"It is no news to me that the priest who officiated in that marriage and John Hastings, Rosalie's half brother, are one and the same. I knew that long ago, but kept it to myself, as I did not wish Rosalie to know how much of my unhappiness I owed to her half brother. Wholly innocent herself, she thinks others are the same, and if you tell her you are a saint she will believe it implicitly, until some act of your own proves the contrary. She is very happy in your society, and I shall do nothing to make her less so, but don't ask me to endorse you cordially, as if nothing had ever happened. The thing is impossible. If we meet I shall treat you well for Rosalie's sake, and shall not seek to injure you so long as you are kind and true to her, but if you harm a hair of Rosalie's head, or bring her to any sorrow, as sure as there is a Heaven above us, I'll pursue you to the ends of the earth, to be even with you."

There was an amused smile on Dr. Matthewson's face as he read this letter, which showed him so plainly what Everard's opinion of him was. A meaning smile, too, it was, and one which his enemy would hardly have cared to see.

"So oh, the young man threatens me," he said to himself. "He will follow me to the end of the earth

if I harm a hair of Rossie's head. Well, I do not intend to harm her if I can help it. I am glad he has shown his hand, though it was foolish in him to do so, and proves that he is not well up in fencing. I wonder what he wrote to Rossie; nothing complimentary of me of course, and if I am right, she will not show me the letter."

He was right, and Rossie did not show him Everard's letter, which did not altogether please her. She had expected him to endorse her brother fully, and forgive him freely, and be almost as glad as herself that she had a natural protector on whom to lean, and instead of that he had written in a way which gave her more pain than pleasure, and his allusion to what "he missed more and more every day, and longed for with an intensity which almost drove him to despair," brought back the old pain in her heart which the excitement of finding her brother had in a measure lessened, and for a few moments she wept passionately for the happiness denied her, and which might have been hers but for a mean act of revenge. She could not show Everard's letter to her brother, but she must speak to him about it, and when next they met in her room, she said to him:

"I have heard from Everard, and he says that he is glad I am—so very—so happy with you. I was sure he would be, and he will be friendly with you always, and, oh, I do so hope you will like each other, and I am almost sure you will. Have you, too, heard from him?"

The doctor laughed a low, musical laugh, and drawing his sister to him, said:

"What a little Puritan you are, Rossie. You cannot dissemble worth a penny. Don't you suppose I know that Everard's letter to you was not all you hoped it to be. He finds it hard to forgive me for having deprived him of something which his maturer manhood tells him is sweeter, more precious, and far more to be desired than the object of his boyish passion. And I cannot blame him. I am as sorry as he, in a different way of course and you—"

He did not finish the sentence, for Rossie broke away from him, and burying her face in the cushions of the couch on which they were sitting, burst into an uncontrollable fit of weeping.

"Don't, don't," she said, as he made an effort to soothe her. "Don't speak to me, please. I must have it out now. I have kept it back so long. Oh, I wish I had died when I was a little girl, and before I grew to be a woman, with a woman's love, which I must fight all my life, and never know a moment of absolute rest and quiet. Oh, brother, why did you do it? Why did you separate me from my love, for he is mine, and I am his. I know I am; he has the same as told me so, and he misses me, and longs for me every day. I was everything to him, he was everything to me. Oh, Everard, just this once I will say out what I feel. I love you—I love you; and I cannot help it. I know it is wrong, know it is wicked, and try to put it away. I bury it out of my sight; I stamp upon it; I think I have the mastery over it, and on the slightest provocation it springs into life more vigorous than ever, and I cannot conquer it."

She had said all she had to say, but she kept on sobbing piteously; low, plaintive sobs they were, like the moaning of one in mortal pain; and, hard-hearted, and utterly unprincipled, and selfish as he was, Dr. Matthewson could not be wholly indifferent to a grief such as he had never witnessed but once, and that was years ago, and many, many miles away, over land and sea, but she who wept before him then, even more wildly than Rossie was weeping now, was a fair-haired German girl asking reparation for the ruin he had wrought.

He had laughed at her, and telling her she would make a splendid queen of tragedy, had bidden her go upon the stage and achieve her fortune, then come to him, and perhaps he would make terms with her. This is what he had said to poor, betrayed Yula when the storm of agony was sweeping over her, and her anguish had not moved him one whit, or made his pulse one beat faster.

But Rossie was quite a different creature. She knew nothing of such girls as Yula Van Eisner. She was Rossie, heiress of the Forrest property, and his trump card, as he mentally styled her, and he walked up and down the room several times, and blew his nose vigorously, and made a feint of wiping his eyes with his perfumed handkerchief, and then came and stood by her, and putting his hand on her bowed head, said to her:

"Don't, Rossie, give way like this, or you will drive me mad, knowing as I do that I have in one sense caused your sorrow. If I could undo it I would, but I cannot. There is, however, a way out of it. Have you ever thought how easily he might get a divorce, which would make him free?"

"He would not be free," and, lifting up her head, Rossie flashed her bright black eyes upon him in-

dignantly. "The Bible would not recognise him as free, neither would I, and you must not speak of such a thing to me."

"Then I will not," he answered, still more soothingly; "but, Rossie, it is folly to give way like this, though for this once I am glad you did. For now I understand better the cause of these pale cheeks and irregular pulse, and think I know the remedy. You need entire change of air and scene, such as you find alone abroad, and in the spring I will take you there for a while at least. Think of a summer in Switzerland among the glorious Alps, with their constantly changing shadows of purple, and crimson, and emerald. I know every rock, and chasm, and winding path there, and shall be so happy in seeing you enjoy them. So, cheer up, Birdie, and bear like a brave, little woman, what cannot be helped. If it could, I'd say, go at it and overcome the obstacle, but if it cannot, why make the best of it. That's my theory."

He was speaking very kindly and sensibly to her now, and she gradually grew calm and listened while he talked of the Continent, and what they should see there, for he quite settled it that they would go, and as nothing in the way of travel could suit Rossie better, she told Mrs. Andrews the next day she could only stay with her until March as she was going abroad with her brother.

To Everard she wrote the same, ignoring altogether his right as her guardian to be consulted.

But Everard did not resent it, though for a time he felt half inclined to say she should not go, for a strong presentiment of evil which might result from her going swept over him with such force as to keep him awake the entire night.

But with the morning his nervous fears subsided, and he could see no reasonable objection to Rossie's going for the summer with her brother, whose perfect knowledge of the manners, and customs, and language of the different countries must make him a very pleasant and useful travelling companion.

Rossie had written that she should go directly to Liverpool, and if Josephine had not been in the same place Everard would so far have overcome his aversion to the doctor as to have spent a little time with the girl he could not put from his mind.

But Josephine was an insuperable objection, and so he wrote what he meant to be his good-bye, and sent her a draft for one hundred pounds, which he said she might need as she would not care to be altogether dependent upon her brother for money.

Rossie's first impulse was to return the draft.

She had a whole quarter's wages due from Mrs. Andrews, and her brother she believed to be quite able and willing to bear all expenses, but Dr. Matthewson advised her to keep the money and not wound Everard by returning it to him.

"You ought to consider his feelings a little," he said, "and I know you must hurt him cruelly at times by your persistent refusal to take what he looks upon as yours."

So Rossie kept the money, or, rather, gave it to her brother to keep for her, and sent a letter of thanks to Everard and another to Bee, telling her of her intended journey, and bidding her good-bye.

With that subtle and mysterious foresight with which women seem to be gifted, and for which there is no explanation, Beatrice anticipated danger at once, though in what form she could not define.

She only knew that she wished Rossie was not going away alone with Dr. Matthewson, but she had no just cause for saying so, and she kept her fears from Everard, but wrote to Rossie that she would be in Liverpool to see her off.

And when Rossie stood at last on the deck of the "Oceanic" Bee was there and Everard, too, taking his last look at the face which would haunt him in the years to come as the faces of the dead haunt us when we feel that by some act of ours interposed in time we might have saved the life dearer than our own. Beatrice had said to him:

"I am going to see Rossie. Will you go with me?" and without a moment's reflection he had gone and spent one blissful day with her, a day never to be forgotten, when he had driven with her in the park, and watched the constantly changing expression of her sweet face, which had grown so pale and thin that he was more than half-reconciled to let her go, hoping much from the sea air and the new life she would lead.

To the doctor he was polite and courteous, and an ordinary observer might have thought them the best of friends, so that Rossie was satisfied, and would have been quite happy if she could have forgotten the distance which would soon intervene between them.

On the whole Beatrice was favourably impressed with Doctor Matthewson, who played the perfect gentleman, and was so kind to Rossie and so thought-

ful for her that she dismissed her fears, and half wished she, too, were going with them. She said as much to Rossie when they stood upon the deck waiting for the order to be given for all visitors to leave.

"Oh, I'd give the world if you were," Rossie cried. "I should not feel as I do—afraid somehow as if I was never to return—never to see you again, or Everard."

She was holding his hand in both hers as she spoke, and in that moment of farewell she forgot everything except the presentiment that she was going from him for ever; that their parting was final; that she should never see his face again, and her tears fell like rain as she bent over and kissed his hand, and said:

"Good-bye, Everard, good-bye, and if it should be for ever, you'll never forget me, will you?"

That was the last she spoke to him—her parting words—which, in the after time, he said over and over again, with a bitterer, heavier pain than that he felt when with Bee he stood upon the shore, and watched the "Oceanic" sailing down the bay, with a little figure in black leaning on the rail and waving its handkerchief to them as long as they could see it.

And so Rossie passed away from their sight, and the next they heard from her she had reached Calais, but was greatly fatigued with the voyage, during which she had been sick most of the time. It was only a few lines she wrote, just to tell them she was safe over the sea.

"When I am stronger," she said, "I will send you and Beatrice a long letter and tell you everything. Now I can only sit by my window and look out upon the busy streets, and occasionally there comes over me a feeling of something like home sickness when I remember how far I am from the friends who never seemed half so dear to me as now, when I am so widely separated from them."

Here there was a break in the letter—a long, vacant space, as if what she had to say next was something very painful to her, and had no connection with what was written first. It was as follows:

"And now I suppose I must tell you something which I very much dislike to do, but brother wishes it, and says you will understand it perfectly as a purely business transaction. So, to be brief and get the troublesome thing off my mind as soon as possible. How it was, neither of us can guess, but in some strange, mysterious way, brother was robbed on the ship, but did not discover it until several hours after the tug had come out and taken off many of the passengers, and among them three or four men who he now thinks were regular blacklegs, he calls them. They seemed very pleasant, and he was with them a good deal. In fact, one of them occupied the same state-room with him, and must have planned the robbery."

"Ordinarily, he says, it would only inconvenience him for a few days, for he is, I believe, quite rich, but unfortunately his money has so tied up that it is not due now, at least not a large amount, and a lady in the party makes quite a difference in one's expenses, he says; not unkindly, you know, or as if he were not glad to have me with him, for he is very kind, and gets and does too much for me, who have been accustomed to so little."

"But to come to the point; he thinks I had better write and ask you to place to his credit with some responsible firm two thousand pounds, from which he can draw, if necessary, before he gets his own. He only wishes to borrow it for a time, and may not use it all or even a part of it, but on my account, he says, he shall feel better to know there is a sure fund to draw from, and so I am asking you for it, without the least feeling that it is mine, for it is not, but as a loan to my brother, who, I think, intends writing to you also on the subject."

But the brother did not write, though Everard waited a day or two before answering Rossie's letter, hoping to hear from the doctor something definite with regard to the robbery, which struck him from the first as a little strange, if not impossible.

Still he did not for a moment hesitate about the money, though two thousand pounds was a large sum to raise on so short a notice, and was rather a heavy loan to be asked for by one who professed to have unlimited means at his command.

But he reflected that it was for Rossie's sake and Rossie's benefit, and made arrangements immediately to get the money for her, and wrote to her to that effect, and said she had a perfect right to draw her own even to thousands, if she chose.

The next he heard from Rossie she was delightfully located in lodgings, and playing keep house, while her brother was the best and kindest man in the world, and so thankful for the money which

Everard had loaned him, and which he said he hoped to repay very soon.

But he did not, and if he looked upon it as a loan he gave no sign to that effect, but utterly ignored the whole thing, except, indeed, as he apprised Everard from time to time of the amount drawn by him, and this was always done in the fewest possible words.

Rossie was the correspondent, and she at first wrote often, and long, interesting letters descriptive of her travels, and after she reached Switzerland, full of the enthusiastic delight she felt with everything around her.

Of her health she seldom spoke, and when she did it was not altogether satisfactory.

Sometimes she was so tired that she had kept her room for two or three days, and again a headache, or sore throat, or cold had confined her to the house for nearly a week; but she was very happy among the Alps, and only wished that Beatrice and Everard were there with her to enjoy what she was enjoying.

As the summer advanced, however, her letters were not so frequent, and the doctor sometimes wrote for her, saying she was not feeling well, and made him her amanuensis.

They were not to be alarmed, he said; it was only a slight heart difficulty, induced by the mountain air, which often affected tourists in that way.

He should take her to Southern France early in the autumn, and then to Italy as the season advanced and would not return to England till spring, when he hoped to bring back a girl full of life, and health, and vigour.

When Everard read this letter there came over him again a great horror of some impending evil threatening Rossie, and do what he might he could not shake it off.

He thought of it by day and dreamed by night, and could he have afforded it, and found any good excuse for doing so, I think he would have started for the Continent, and kept near the girl, who, it seemed to him, was in some imminent peril, though of what nature he could not guess.

Sometime in November a letter came from Dr. Matthewson, dated at Nice, where he said they had been for two or three weeks, and where, as he expressed it, "I hope our dear invalid is improving. Switzerland was not the place for her, and she seemed to grow weaker every day she stayed, so I hastened back to Paris, and then came here, where she seems very happy, but is weak as an infant. She complains of nothing but weariness, so tired all the time, and cannot get rested. Of course I have the best medical advice for her, and everything is done which can be to arrest the disease and give her some strength. The physicians have forbidden her reading or writing, even short letters, and so I must do it for her for the present. I hope that neither you nor Miss Belknap will be needlessly distressed, for I assure you there is no immediate danger, and with proper care, such as she has now, she will, I think, be much better, and quite able to return in the spring. She is calling to me now from her chair by the window, and says: 'Tell them not to be troubled about me; that I walked too much in Switzerland and am not rested yet, but am so happy here in beautiful Nice, looking out upon the blue Mediterranean.'"

After this letter Rossie never wrote again, and though Everard and Beatrice wrote frequently to her, asking her just to send them a line, if nothing more, Dr. Matthewson replied, saying always the same thing, "She is forbidden to write even so much as her name;" and so the fall and winter crept on, and Rossie was first in Venice, then in Florence, and then in Rome.

And then Dr. Matthewson wrote one day to Everard saying that Rossie did not know of this letter, neither did he wish her to know, as it would only trouble her and retard her recovery, but to be brief, he found himself a little straitened for money just now, physicians charged so abominably, and on account of Rossie's illness their expenses were, of course, much heavier than they would otherwise have been, and if Everard would make another advance for Rossie he should be very glad. He was intending to leave Rome early in the spring, and go to Germany to a famous cure, where the prices were very high.

Double the amount of money asked for was sent, or, rather, placed at the doctor's disposal, and when that night Everard went to Elm Park to call upon Beatrice, he said, in reply to her inquiries for news from Rossie:

"We shall never see her again."

(To be Continued.)

CONVICTED.

CHAPTER II.

THE adventure of Lord Kingscourt, with his friends, in Greece, was the sensation of the day, not only in Athens, but in England. Capt. Wilbraham bestirred himself to purpose. Indignant Englishmen wrote letters to the "Times," demanding if such outrages upon the liberties of English subjects could be permitted by the government.

English maidens spoke of it as "so romantic," and longed to meet the heroes of such experiences. The Marquis of Middleton, father of the Hon. Bertie Knollys, made a personal appeal to royalty. The noble connections of the Earl of Kingscourt, and many noble persons who would have been delighted to become his connections, bestirred themselves in his behalf.

The government took immediate steps for the release of the two young men, communicating with the Hellenic authorities; energetic measures were inaugurated, troops of Greek soldiers were sent to scour the roads, the valleys, mountains, woods and gorges, between Athens and Corinth, but all to no purpose.

No trace of the bandits' retreat could be discovered.

Two months went by—the end of the three months of probation was close at hand. People began to grow nervously anxious.

Stories of Spiridon's remorseless cruelty were rehearsed from lip to lip, or reprinted in the newspapers.

It was remembered that he had sent a prisoner's ear, done up in cotton, to that prisoner's friends, only a year before, because of a delay in remitting ransom money.

It was remembered also that he had put to death one or two persons obnoxious to him, who had fallen into his power.

Captain Wilbraham determined to take the ransom-money to Athens in time and rescue his friends in any event, the Marquis of Middleton and others assisting him.

Meanwhile, how fared the prisoners?

During those terrible weeks they had suffered from semi-starvation, from cold and dampness, from the wretched stone floor on which they were forced to sleep, and from various other annoyances, until their life had become quite unbearable.

They had grown thin and gaunt, with racking pains in their joints, and Mr. Knollys had been attacked by a cough.

Long since Lord Kingscourt had come to a decision to pay his ransom and study justice afterwards, and had written two letters to Captain Wilbraham, in one of which he had enclosed a bank-cheque for the sum of twenty thousand pounds, which he begged him to bring at once with Knolly's ransom.

This letter, by some unaccountable fate, was delayed a fortnight on the way, and was received by Captain Wilbraham only after he had decided to act upon his own responsibility.

He presented and cashed the cheque, obtained the money for the Honourable Bertie, and set off for Athens, accompanied by two fellow-officers of the Guards.

Barely time was allowed them for the journey, with no allowance whatever for possible detention. The three months were nearly up; they pushed on with all speed to Trieste, and found that the steamer they had meant to catch had sailed.

Nothing remained but to await the next steamer, or go by some other route. In any case a delay had occurred—and a delay was fatal. By the best route that remained to them they must arrive at Athens two days too late.

The despair of Captain Wilbraham, his horror and agony, may be imagined.

The fatal day that was to decide the fates of the young Earl of Kingscourt and the Honourable Bertie Knollys dawned upon Greece in sunshine and beauty.

Within their secret cavern the bandits lounged about in dull expectancy, some playing cards, some telling stories, and others smoking and drinking.

Lord Kingscourt's valet sat on a bench, his face buried in his hands.

The young earl and his friend paced the long cavern arm in arm.

"Well, Bertie," said our hero, breaking the long silence, "our three months' probation is up to-day."

Heaven grant that Wilbraham is in Athens with the money," said Knollys. "Spiridon's agent went yesterday to find him. If he gets the money we shall be released to-night."

"Which we won't consider, Bertie. Let us hope for the best. If anything has happened, and Wilbraham is not at Athens, or if he trusted to the forlorn hope that the soldiers would rescue us, then the worst will happen. Spiridon is a fiend incarnate. It would afford him the highest delight to crop off our ears and transmit them to England. I am not a vain person," added her hero, more lightly, "and I do not like to break my assortment of ears. The pair are quite essential to my happiness."

"And to mine also," acknowledged the Honourable Bertie. "And I have a conviction that I am to lose one of them! If we were to be mutilated to-day and Wilbraham were to arrive to-morrow, the English language would not suffice to express my feelings."

At this juncture Spiridon himself appeared from his private room, which was quite luxuriously furnished, and demanded of Laros if his messenger had not returned. He was answered in the negative.

"He ought to have been here before this," said the bandit chief, with a frown. "I can't imagine why he delays, unless he has been stupid enough to be caught by the police."

Spiridon was waiting in deep anxiety when a step was heard in the outer cave, and the messenger made his appearance.

He was the lieutenant of the band, the brother of the chief, and was therefore deep in Spiridon's confidence.

"Well?" said the latter.

"It is not well!" was the response. "The Anglos has not returned to Athens."

"Not returned? How is this?" cried the chief, amazed. "Do the Anglos then not care to preserve their beauty? Do they think so little of the loss of an ear? Come, then, there is some mistake. You did not go to the proper inn."

"I went to every hotel or inn of every description in Athens," was the response. "I disguised myself and went to the Consulate and made inquiries. Captain Wilbraham is not come."

"Then, by Jupiter! I will not be balked of my vengeance, if I must be cheated of the ransom!" cried Spiridon. "Perhaps they thought I dared not do what I threatened," and he smiled like a demon. "But, first of all, tell me what is going on in Athens. Is there news?"

"It is known that the three months of waiting expire to-day, and that no help has come for the prisoners. The wildest excitement prevails. The troops are scouring the country, miles to the southward of us."

"Sit you down, Lieutenant, and write two letters to accompany the two ears—no, the three ears—for we must not forget the faithful servant. Present my compliments to the prisoners' relatives—you'll find their addresses in their notebooks—and say that I have doubled the ransom of each of the prisoners."

The lieutenant found ink and paper and wrote as directed.

"And say," continued Spiridon, "that if I am not paid within a month I shall send the other bodily members, as I promised, and finally, will I send their hearts."

"I have written it. Is there more?"

"I will sign it," said the chief, affixing his scrawling signature. "Copy it for the other box. Alessandro, the boxes!"

Two small, wooden boxes filled with cotton were brought. The letter was copied; a second signature was affixed. Then Spiridon turned to his prisoners.

"It appears that a rich Anglos lord's ear is worth nothing," he observed, ironically. "Have you any friend in particular to whom you wish yours sent, my lord?"

"You surely do not intend to perpetrate any such atrocity as you threaten," cried the earl. "I wrote to my friend, sending him a bank-cheque for the money. There has been some delay, but if he is not now at Athens, he will be there to-morrow or next day. Wait a week—"

"Not a day—not an hour."

"We will pay every penny of the ransom. The money is on its way," cried the Honourable Bertie. "For Heaven's sake, be patient for only a day or two."

Spiridon sneered.

"I have little to do with Heaven," he said, in his mellifluous voice. "I regret that for the sake of Heaven, or anything else, I shall not wait one hour—not one minute. Upon them, comrades! Bind them!"

The outlaws hurled themselves upon the prisoners and bound them securely.

"My sword!" exclaimed Spiridon.

His sword was brought him.

"Now you shall see how I keep my word," he ex-

claimed, his eyes glittering, his voice piercing in its fury. "Hold the lord's head! So!"

Kingscourt's head was held as in a vice. Into that moment was crowded horror, agony, despair, an awful sense of humiliation, a terrible anguish. To be so disgracefully maimed—he almost preferred death.

His struggles had left him weak. He closed his eyes as Spiridon with the bound of a tiger leaped towards him with uplifted sword.

Before that sword could fall, a girl, looking like an angel of light, came flying in from the outer room, her voice, sweet and clear, ringing through the cavern in an awful cry:

"Spiridon! Stop!"

CHAPTER III.

The advent of that young girl upon the scene of cruelty and vengeance was like that of an angel from Heaven. At sound of her clear, sweet, ringing voice, the bandit chief paused, his sword in mid-air, his face turned back over his shoulder, his eyes staring incredulously, with mingled wonder, horror, amazement, and consternation in their depths.

Lord Kingscourt stared at the intruder also with startled eyes, and the Honourable Bertie Knollys, Briggs, the earl's servant, and every outlaw in the cavern regarded her with wonder and astonishment.

She advanced swiftly to the very centre of the great rock chamber, and paused in the full glare of the red firelight, and only a few spaces from the tragic scene that, until her appearance, had held every eye in fascination.

She was scarcely twenty years of age, slim and graceful as a palm, with a small, proud head, exquisitely poised upon a slender throat, and with a face of wonderful beauty and loveliness—a pure, proud face, spirited, sweet, and radiant with a rare nobility, a lofty and noble soul, a great and generous nature.

Her features, small and clearly cut, were Greek in outline, more perfect than any dream of ancient Greek sculpture—the forehead broad and low, shaded by massive waves of bronze-brown hair, which was drawn away and coiled low at the back of her head; the sapphire eyes, deep, warm, and soulful, but just now wild and pleading, the short, proud upper lip, the tender, sweet, and resolute mouth, the teeth like pearls, the exquisitely curved chin, the tiny, close-set ears—all these made up a beauty at once grand, commanding, yet tender and bewitching.

She was dressed like a Greek girl, had spoken in Greek, and yet, in spite of speech and attire, she did not appear to be of Greek origin.

Something in her manner or expression gave to the Earl of Kingscourt and the Honourable Bertie Knollys the odd conviction that she was of English birth and of noble blood.

Even in that moment it was easy to see that she was high-bred, cultured, and patrician in habits as in beauty.

"You here!" exclaimed Spiridon, recovering his speech at last. "You, my young lady!"

"Yes, I am here," she answered, pale now as any lily, but resolute still, regarding him with great, fearless eyes. "I am come in time to save these unfortunate Anglosos."

"How came you here?" demanded Spiridon. "How did you discover the secret entrance to our retreat? How—?"

"It was not so difficult," replied the girl, promptly. "I have long known that you were Spiridon, the bandit chief, although I made your acquaintance, as you know, under another name. Like everyone else, I have heard of two poor Englishmen in your power. I read in the Athens newspaper, which we received by chance yesterday, that to-day their three months of safety would expire, and that their friend had not returned with their ransom, and, without doubt, the terrible Spiridon would keep his word, and make them for life. I could not get them out of my mind. I thought of them all night, and to-day I wandered about the mountains in the hope of seeing you and pleading with you to release them?"

"Well?" said Spiridon, as she paused.

"I had been wandering all the afternoon, and was tired out, and about to return home in despair," continued the girl, "when I beheld your brother approaching stealthily, looking around him at every step. I believed he must be on his way to the retreat. I followed him, with one thought of rescuing the captives from their awful fate. I managed to elude his observation. I crept after him softly, and when he crawled into the bushes and disappeared into your cunningly concealed entrance, I waited a moment to gather courage, and followed him. I stood in the outer cavern while he made his report. If you had spared the prisoners I should have gone away as silently as I had come. You would have

maimed them both, and I would not let you do it!"

She looked at him dauntlessly, no shadow of fear on the lovely, frank face only a wistful, earnest pleading.

"You are bold!" said Spiridon. "By Jupiter, but you are bold, my young lady, to beard the lion in his den, Spiridon in his retreat!"

The outlaws growled ominously, their hands flying to their weapons.

"You have spied out our secret," continued the chief. "You know the way of our retreat. Were you a man I would shoot you dead where you stand. Such knowledge as you have gained is fatal to its possessor. Your sympathies have led you into a worse trouble than that from which you would have rescued these prisoners."

The girl dared to smile, a bright, fearless smile.

"You would not harm me, Spiridon," she said, confidently. "You know that I would not betray you. You would not forget how I found you last year on the mountain slope, lying in a thicket with a broken leg, unable to move. You had been lying there for hours, until you were feverish and almost delirious. You gave me a feigned name, you remember. I went home and brought servants, who carried you to my home. You were nursed through a long and terrible illness. In your delirium you betrayed your identity. There was a price set on your head—a great reward offered for you, dead or alive. You were wicked—your soul was stained with crimes; you had murdered the helpless, the innocent, the good; but you were ill and helpless, and I could not betray you. You were absolutely in my power, and I could not give you up even to the laws you had outraged."

"We nursed you well again, and you left us, but the night you went away I told you of my discovery of your identity, and in your gratitude for our forbearance and kindness, you swore a great oath to protect my father and me from every harm, so far as lay in your power, and you vowed that if ever I asked of you a great favour you would grant it, at any cost to yourself. The hour for the fulfilment of that promise has come. I ask of you a great favour—the liberty of these men. I saved your life; give me theirs!"

Spiridon's face softened. He was not a man ever to forget an injury, and equally, he never forgot a kindness.

While people told blood-curdling stories of his cruelty to his prisoners, he was at home in every cottage for miles around, and the peasantry would have defended him with their lives.

There must have been something of good in him to win so much of fidelity and ardent affection. That good came to the surface now.

"You are right, my young lady," he said. "I owe you my life, and I promised to repay you whenever an opportunity occurred. I hardly thought it would occur like this. I never dreamed that a man lived—much less a woman—who dared beard Spiridon in his den. As you have made your demand I will try to comply with it. You shall have the servant's life," and he pointed to Briggs. "And I will also give you this gentleman," and he indicated Mr. Knollys. "They shall be taken both blindefolded this very day, and set free at the very spot upon which they were captured."

The girl looked at the Honourable Bertie, with her wondrous sapphire eyes glowing. Then her gaze wandered to the earl and rested on his grave and handsome face.

The colour came into his cheeks as her eyes met his fully in a strange gaze, and his heart fluttered as it had never before flattered under the gaze of a woman.

"And the other?" she said, simply. "What of him?"

"He is a great Anglos milordo, worth a monstrous ransom. I cannot give him up," replied Spiridon. "Business has been dull lately. Travellers do not often venture over these roads without securing immunity from attack, or else guarded by cavasses. And until to-day I have kept my promises—this game was too big to let go so easily! I shall get forty thousand Anglos pounds sterling out of milordo Anglos—or he shall die!"

"Would you break your promise to me?" asked the girl. "I don't believe you would break your oath, Spiridon. I claim this lord's life at your hands, equally with the others."

Spiridon walked to and fro restlessly and impatiently, a struggle going on within him.

His men waited in respectful silence, but with perceptible anxiety. Their chief was regarded with awe by them, and they dared not question or remonstrate with him, but they did not believe that he could let Lord Kingscourt go free.

"You ask too much, my young lady," cried Spiridon, in a tone of keen annoyance. "You saved

one life. I offer you two. Is not that a fair exchange?"

"When you made that promise," said the girl, quietly, "when you took that oath by all you held sacred, I did not think that you would ever stoop to bargain, to weigh out your payment drop for drop."

Spiridon's cheeks flushed.

There was a brief silence. Then the girl made a movement to depart.

"Spiridon has failed to keep his word," she said, scornfully. "I will leave you, since you value your life and your oath so little."

She knew that he would not suffer her to go thus: that the Greek brigand is as intensely superstitious as he is brutal and wicked; and that Spiridon would not dare to break the solemn oath he had taken at the time to which she had alluded.

"Stay!" cried Spiridon, hoarsely. "I cannot—dare not go back on my oath. If you demand these three lives—take them! They are yours. My debt has cost me dearly, but now it is paid!"

The girl's face lit up with a glorious radiance.

"I knew that you would keep your word," she cried. "I thank you, Spiridon. The memory of this good deed will be of more value in the years to come than all the ransom money they would have given you."

She turned swiftly, but not abruptly, to the prisoners, and said:

"You hear? You are free, all of you. Spiridon frees you without ransom. Come with me."

"Stay," again said Spiridon. "These men shall be set free, my young lady, but they must be blindfolded and taken to the spot upon which they were captured. My men shall escort them thither, and set them on their way to Athens. This shall be done at once. Every precaution must be taken lest they learn the way to our retreat."

"So that they are released immediately, and without injury," said the young girl. "I can ask nothing more. My errand is accomplished. I have not trusted you in vain, Spiridon. Send them off with their guard, and I will go."

Before the brigand chief could reply the young Earl of Kingscourt came forward. He was still bound, his hands behind him; his face was pale with emotion; his dusky eyes were full of warmth and gratitude.

"My dear young lady," he exclaimed, "let me thank you with all my soul for the services you have rendered me to-day. I shall never forget your heroism, your dauntless courage in venturing into this place to save three persons whom you had never seen, your noble self-forgetfulness. May Heaven reward you, and may Heaven bless you, even as I do!"

He bowed his head low and reverently before her. The Honourable Bertie expressed his gratitude also in warm terms, and Briggs, in good, nervous English, thanked her for the preservation of his valuable ear.

To the amusement of Kingscourt and Knollys, the girl appeared to understand Briggs's English fully as well as their modern Greek.

Spiridon watched this scene gloomily. There was a brooding discontent in his eyes, a sullenness, a strange spark of jealousy and rage.

"I have fulfilled my pledge," he exclaimed, "or shall have done so when these men are set free. They are saved. But you, my young lady, who will save you?"

"What do you mean?" she questioned.

"I mean that the secret of our retreat is in your possession. I mean that the lives of this score of gallant fellows depend upon a woman's tongue. I mean that my life—the life you saved—is in your keeping. Soldiers are scouring the country for us. A price is set upon my head. You know too much, I dare not let you go free."

"That's the talk," said the lieutenant, gruffly. "She must not go free to tell tales of us."

The faces of the men began to clear.

The girl's face took on a sudden shade of hauteur, but nothing of fear.

"You do not think that I will betray you?" she demanded. "What would you gain by keeping me here a prisoner? Is this your gratitude, Spiridon? You would keep me a perpetual captive because I know your secret? I thought you had more sense."

"You speak boldly, my young lady."

"Because I cannot fear the man I helped to nurse in his illness, who lay before me as helpless as a young child. You would not harm me, Spiridon? You would not kill me? I should be in your way if you were to keep me prisoner, and drag me about on your marches from retreat to retreat. The matter can be arranged more simply."

"But who?"

"You know that I believe in Him who watches over all, the just and unjust alike," said the girl, uplifting her sapphire eyes reverently. "I will swear

to you by my faith in Him, and as I hope for His mercy, to keep the secret of your retreat, even from my own father. So you need not fear to let me go."

"The girl is right," said the lieutenant, gruffly. "We cannot keep her perpetually a prisoner. We might kill her—"

Spiridon started.

"Kill her," he repeated, huskily.

His cunning eyes dwelt gloatingly upon her beauty. Some of his men began to murmur and demand the girl's life. The thief's haughty spirit rose in her defence.

"She shall not die!" he declared, glaring upon his band with ferocious eyes. "I trusted my life to her once and she did not betray me. I will trust her again. She will not dare be false to the oath I shall dictate to her. Kneel, girl."

The girl knelt as ordered. The ruddy glow of light fell squarely on her fair young face, and Spiridon was reassured by the expression of honesty, truth, and sincerity upon her features.

He dictated an oath to her, and she repeated the words to him in an unflinching voice.

"And now," he said, when she had finished, "I will trust you, and may the Virgin destroy you if you prove false. You may go!"

But the visitor would not depart until the prisoners had been blindfolded and led forth into the outer air. She followed close behind them. They passed upon a rocky ledge, at a little distance from the entrance to the cavern, and Lord Kingscourt, heavily blindfolded, held out his hand, as she bade him and his companions good-bye.

Her hand, small and soft, and cool as a snowflake, dropped into his.

"May I not know your name?" asked the young earl, eagerly. "We shall meet again, and—"

Before the girl could answer the bandits in charge hurried the prisoners away, roughly commanding them to keep silence. The young girl looked after the Englishmen, her gaze dwelling longest upon the earl's noble figure, but as they finally passed out of sight behind crags and a clump of wild olive trees, she aroused herself with a start, and looked around her. The hour was growing late; it would soon be dark.

"I ought to be at home," she thought. "Father will be anxious."

With a stifled sigh, she moved down the mountain slope, springing from rock to rock with the speed of a startled chamois. When, a few minutes later, Spiridon came forth to speak to her, expecting to find her somewhere near, she had totally vanished from the scene.

"Gone!" he muttered. "Then I shall have to seek her at her home. I trust her, but the men will not. Our lives hang upon a woman's word. The men are right. The girl must be bound to us in such a manner that she will not dare to betray us. Our interests must be made her interests. We are under the ban of the law. She must be brought under that ban also. By Jupiter! Is she not magnificent? Lives there another woman—lives there a man—in all the world—who dare perform her feat of to-day?" and his eyes glewed with admiration. "As well tear from the hungry lion the food within its jaws as tear from Spiridon his gaping prey. She has the seal of a lioness in the frail body of a girl—the beauty of a young goddess with the grace of a fawn. By all the ancient gods! she would make a glorious bride for a bandit chief. I loved her from the first, but she seemed as far above me as the stars! Now—now—she must and shall be mine. I'll see her in a day or two and let her know her fate."

CHAPTER IV.

Upon the southern shore of the Gulf of Lepanto, some many miles from Corinth, and at a distance from any public highway or frequented road, stands a lonely, low Greek dwelling.

It is long and large, with wide pillared verandahs, and an inner court, and is the centre of a handsome estate, which is shut in from the world by the tall, tree-clad hills upon three sides and by the shining gulf upon the fourth.

The only land approach to this lonely house is through a mountain gorge but seldom travelled. The people who dwell here in a solitude as strange as weird make their highway of the gulf, and their manner of travel is by boat.

The estate comprises groups of olives and oranges, of mulberries and figs, with great, thrifty vineyards, which yield a handsome revenue.

There is a little hamlet of labourers half a mile below the mansion, and the latter, hidden in its dusky groves, not even seen from the gulf, is left to a loneliness strange, intense, and oppressive.

The owner of this secluded spot was a foreigner,

but whether English or American, Scotch or Irish, no one knew.

He had come to Greece fifteen years before the opening date of our story, bringing with him a little girl of five years.

He had bought his estate of a Greek farmer, had spent much money upon it, planted new groves, improved and added to the dwelling, and established himself in the life of a recluse.

He rarely visited Athens or Corinth, never quitted Greece, and seemed content to drag out his lonely existence far from the haunts of men.

No visitors ever came to see him; no letters ever arrived for him; he took no foreign newspapers; and from year's end to year's end no event occurred to stir the monotony of a life that must at times have become intolerable.

He had bought his property under the name of Mr. Strange, but his labourers and servants corrupted and softened the name into Stasos.

He was a proficient in the Greek language, his servants were all Greek; and in outward forms he complied with Greek customs; yet his home, in spite of its surroundings, had many English peculiarities, and he had carefully trained and educated his daughter after the manner of English people.

It was nearly dusk of the day upon which Lord Kingscourt and his companions had been so bravely and singularly rescued from Spiridon's malicious fury, and Mr. Strange was walking to and fro in his verandah, passing now and then to gaze upon the waters of the gulf through the vista of the trees, or to scan the scene around him with anxious expectancy.

He was a tall, magnificent-looking man, of some forty-five years of age, with a stately, majestic figure, with a distinguished presence, and a manner at once gentle, courteous, yet tinged with reserve and haughtiness.

His grandly-shaped head was covered with close-clustering curls of short fair hair. His eyes were of deepest blue, and full of melancholy.

His features were nobly moulded, fair of complexion, and he wore a tawny moustache that shaded his mouth.

It could be seen at a glance that he belonged to a high class of society; that he was thoroughly well educated, intelligent, and wellbred.

Fitted by nature and education to be a leader of men, how did it happen that he was buried here in this strange solitude? An Englishman of the patrician type, what had driven him apart from his kind to live the life of a hermit?

There was a dark and terrible mystery in his life. The gloom of a terrible past rested heavily upon him.

The shadow grew thicker. The glimpses of the gulf were blotted out. The groves became indistinct and shadowy, and the moon rose fair and glorious, shining with a radiance that flooded all the landscape with a light nearly equal to that of day.

"Strange she does not come!" the recluse said to himself, uneasily. "I have done wrong in giving her so much freedom. She has been away since noon. Can any accident have happened to her? I will order out the men to look for her."

He made a movement to descend the verandah, when suddenly he beheld a girl riding swiftly over the wide lawn and approaching the dwelling. Her horse was an English pony, sure-footed and rugged, which had been imported expressly for her. The rider was the girl who had rescued Lord Kingscourt and his companions from the cruel hands of Spiridon.

Mr. Strange waited upon the verandah until the girl rode up. She slipped from her saddle, and the pony went at a gallop round to his stable, while his rider flew up the steps, all brightness and animation, and flung herself in his arms.

"Back again, papa," she exclaimed, returning his caresses with interest, and speaking in the English language. "And hungry as a hunter! Am I too late for tea?"

"An hour late, Alex," exclaimed Mr. Strange. "I was beginning to fear that some harm had happened to you. We must have no more of these long rides, my child. I have been full of fears. What if you had encountered some of those brigands of whose exploits we hear so much lately? They might have captured you and held you for ransom, as they are holding those unhappy Englishmen of whom we read yesterday. No more long rambles. Remember, Alex."

"I will remember, papa."

"Now run in and prepare yourself for tea. You will find me waiting at the tea-table."

The mysterious recluse looked after his daughter with fond, proud eyes, as her slim, graceful shape vanished within the doorway. It was plain to see

that all the passion of his great nature found expression in a tender worship of her.

Her voice was his sweetest music; her wonderful loveliness was his perpetual delight. In all the wide world, she was the only being that belonged to him, and he watched over her with a jealous care—akin to that of a mother.

He had devoted himself to her education and happiness from the hour of their coming to Greece fifteen years before.

He was thoroughly educated, being a graduate of Oxford, was conversant with several European languages, and a fine musician. He instructed his daughter carefully, making her an apt pupil.

When Alex had attained the age of fourteen, he had sent, through an agent at Athens, to Paris, for a competent governess for her, and for five years the Frenchwoman lived in the lonely Greek house, becoming as fond of her pupil as everyone did who knew her. Then the governess had returned to Paris, and Alex had been installed as mistress of her father's house, free to do as she willed; and it was then that she had indulged her love of long rambles, one of which had resulted in her rescue of the bandit Spiridon.

Mr. Strange, idolising the girl, had done his best to spoil her—her wishes were his law. She seemed like a young queen in her domain.

With an ordinary nature, such training, or want of training, would have been most disastrous, but Alex was of singularly sunny temperament, warm-hearted, gay and joyous, generous and loving, and her father's tenderness had done her good instead of harm. If she was a little wilful and imperious at times, daring and fearless, she had yet one of the noblest natures, grand and unselfish, fearful of giving pain, brave, and earnest.

Mr. Strange presently entered the dwelling, coming into a small, pleasant dining room that opened upon the verandah.

The tea-table was spread here, and a moderator lamp burned with a yellow glow in its centre. The table had an English look, and certain viands upon it were also of English origin; but the honey from Hymettus, the goat's milk, the cakes, and preserved fruits, were all peculiar to Greece.

Mr. Strange had scarcely entered the room when his daughter made her appearance in a fresh Greek costume, her bronze hair arranged in loose, tawny waves, her eyes sparkling, her lovely face bright and animated.

She took her place at the urn, and began a conversation which was merry on her part, her father saying but little, but smiling indulgently upon her.

As soon as the meal was over Miss Strange touched her little call-bell to summon her servant, and led the way to the drawing room, Mr. Strange accompanying her.

This apartment was long and high, with a polished oaken floor, dotted with Turkish rugs, and furnished with chintz-draped couches and easy-chairs, low book-cases, writing tables, pictures and statuary, and with a magnificent grand piano. It was lighted with lamps and a cluster or two of wax candles, and was at once luxurious and homelike.

Miss Strange sat down at the piano and played a brilliant piece of opera music, and then, as was her usual evening custom, sang in an exquisite contralto voice several Scotch ballads.

"Come and sit down by me, Alex," said her father, when the music at last ceased. "I have something to say to you."

The girl obeyed, sitting upon a hassock beside him, and dropping her lovely face to his knee.

"You haven't told me your day's adventures, Gipsy," said her father, gravely, caressing her hair. "You are so usually ready to tell me all the little incidents of your rambles that your silence now shows me that something has really happened to you. Did you meet anyone on the mountains?"

The girl hesitated, but the habit of perfect confidence, upon her part, at least, had always existed between the pair, and she could not withhold the truth now.

"What quick eyes you have, papa!" she exclaimed. "I had a real adventure to-day, but it was of my own seeking. I was rash, I suppose. I did a strange thing—and reflected afterwards. You remember my patient of last year—Spiridon?"

"Only too well. I have always regretted allowing the man to be brought to this house. He should have been left at one of the labourer's cottages, half a mile below."

(To be Continued.)

THE HOLBORN AMPHITHEATRE re-opened on Saturday, under the management of Mr. James Taylor.



[NO HEART TO GIVE.]

THEIR AFTERMATH.

MILLY KIRTLAND's choice was a very natural one under the circumstances, one of these being the fact that she was only sixteen, and not more given to looking beneath the surface of things and into the future for results, than most girls of that age, and another and more significant one being that from her earliest infancy she had been accustomed to having her own way, hardly knowing what it was to defer to the wishes or commands of her parents.

And so when it came to a choice between Bradley Holmes and Leroy Maynard, the former, big, awkward and tashful, the latter, handsome as Lucifer, easy and confident in manner, and with an oily tongue, it was only natural that she should insist upon pleasing her own fancy, which, like many another silly girl, she mistook for love, and should choose a husband as many people do books, for the gilded outside, instead of the real merit of the work.

Milly was one of those unfortunates ruined by indulgence and injudicious management, until, at sixteen, she had no more inclination to submit to parental control than she had had at six.

"I tell you, father," she said, irritably, her face flushed and her eyes cast down, for it was the first time that the embarrassing subject had been brought up between them, "I tell you there is no manner of use in talking about this any more. I never shall think of marrying Bradley Holmes—for it's him you mean, of course—if I live to be a thousand years old!"

"Well, well," was the reply, in a conciliatory tone, "that is all perfectly satisfactory. I don't want you to marry him, or anyone, mind. I'm in no haste to see you married. Quite the contrary. If you will

give me the same assurance in regard to Leroy Maynard, I shall have nothing more to ask."

Milly's cheeks took a deeper colour, but she compressed her lips and remained silent.

"Milly," said her father, again, after watching her a few moments, and his voice took a more decided tone, "I want you to understand this matter, now. If your mother were living, I should leave it all to her management—I never have taken it upon myself to control you, you know;—but you are too young yet to decide for yourself in any important matter, and I must not see you throw yourself away without trying to save you. You must know—you would, if you would think dispassionately about it, that Leroy Maynard is not the kind of man to make any woman happy. The way he treats his mother and sisters ought to convince you of that, if there were nothing more against him, but it is said he both drinks and gambles. In fact, I don't know of a single recommendation he possesses, except his handsome person and his father's money, and they may both take wings and disappear in a day; and then he will be a wreck indeed."

Tears, partly of anger and partly of pain, gathered in Milly's brown eyes, and her lips and voice trembled, as she replied:

"It is all hearsay—all that you have said against him. There are so many who are envious of him. There are plenty of girls in this place, yes, and out of it, too, who would give their eyes to get him. He might take his pick anywhere—and he's as good as those that talk so much about him!"

This is merely a specimen of many after conversations between father and daughter, all to no purpose, however, as the sequel will show.

Bradley Holmes, thanks somewhat to his slow understanding, but more to his honest, unsuspecting nature, was among the last to mistrust the relation existing between Leroy Maynard and the girl whom

he had always, since he could remember, regarded as in some way belonging to him; and when he did come to understand it, from Milly's own lips, it seemed to him that the heavens and earth had come together with a great crash.

"Why, I don't understand, Milly!" he said, in a dazed way, and the despair and fright in his honest blue eyes was more than Milly could bear to look upon. "It seems impossible! I don't believe I have rightly got your meaning! Why, I thought we belonged to each other! I thought you understood it so, as well as I! To be sure, I don't know as I ever asked you, in so many words, whether you would marry me or not—since we were children, I mean; and that's not so very long ago. We used to talk about it then, and love each other dearly; and I have not changed; but it all seemed to be understood between us somehow; and I'm sure everybody else seemed to understand it, too."

He paused, looking at Milly as though he expected her to help him out of the mystery, but she felt too guilty and miserable to attempt to say a word. She was only waiting for him to go before she "gave in and had a good cry;" for she was not a heartless coquette, whatever else she might be; and, what was more, down in the depths of her heart she had more respect—yes, and more real love—for the poor fellow than she had for Leroy Maynard, though unaware of the fact then.

"It was a true sisterly feeling," she assured herself, just because her pulses did not thrill at his touch, and her face flush at the mention of his name. They stood with averted eyes and burning cheeks, while Bradley resumed:

"It was all right enough with us, Milly, till Leroy Maynard came around," and then, with a look of contempt, and in quite a different manner: "Leroy Maynard!" he repeated, "Milly, you don't know him. He is not the man you think him. He is selfish and cruel in disposition, and entirely without manly principle, and you will repent it all your life-long if you marry him."

"Let me say all I've got to say now, Milly," he said, thinking she was about to interrupt him, probably with some defence of her absent lover. "Let me have my say out, for if you send me away from you now, and take that contemptible sneak and scoundrel" (this with such a flash of anger and scorn in the blue eyes as was not often seen there), "I mean never to speak to you again as long as I live, if I meet you every day."

Then his mood suddenly changing again:

"Oh, Milly!" he cried, going over to where she stood, with her back toward him, looking out of the window—looking, but seeing nothing—and passing one hand gently around her shoulders, while with the other he tried to turn her averted face toward him: "Oh, Milly, I've grown up in the belief that you would be my wife sometime; I hardly thought it was time yet, we are both so young; I never thought of any other girl—never dreamed of any other. It seems as if I cannot live without you! Milly, you don't consider what you are doing! Take time, and think and don't turn away the best friend you have in His world."

He stopped before his voice utterly broke down; and Milly, barely able to speak audibly, faltered out that she "didn't mean to send him away—she wanted him for a friend always, just as he had always been."

And then the painful interview ended. But she married Leroy Maynard, and lived a gay, and, to all outward appearance, a happy life for two years, and then her sorrows began.

Her husband, always inclined to dissipation, as soon as he was married began to give freer rein to his taste, and if she ventured a remonstrance, answered her first with sneering raillery, afterwards with abuse, so that she at last forebore to irritate him, although she knew that he was both wasting his property and destroying himself at the same time.

At length, and chiefly through his own extravagant and dissolute habits, the mercantile firm of which he and his father were principal partners failed, utterly and irredeemably; and but for the small patrimony left Milly by her father, who, to add her grief and trouble, died about this time (and who by the way, was her only near relative), beggary would have stared them in the face.

This sum, small as it was, by judicious management might have afforded them a living; but Leroy Maynard was one who scorned economy as meanness, and swore that he would "live a gentleman while he did live," and so, contrary to Milly's feeble protest, speculated with it and lost it, and then, coward-like, abandoned her to take care of herself and three children, the youngest but a few weeks old, as best she could, and fled the place, and was never again heard from.

And all this took place within eight years after Milly's fatal choice.

Ten more years passed—years of toil, privation and wearing anxiety—years which left their traces upon Milly's once lovely face and graceful form.

Several times within this period she had changed her dwelling-place, in the hope of bettering her chances of earning food and clothing for her family; and at the time when we again make her acquaintance, she was living some ten miles from her native village, in a country neighbourhood, where, among the well-to-do farmers, both she and her children found employment suited to their several capacities, and sufficient to furnish them with at least the necessities of life.

"Thank Heaven, the schools are free!" the poor mother often said, and my children are not condemned to utter ignorance as well as poverty."

Well, time had brought changes to Bradley Holmes, too. As well as Milly—beneficent changes, the superficial observer would say, without waiting to consider whether, while he had grown in wealth and popularity, he had gained also in those inner qualities which proclaim the true man.

True to his word, he never spoke to Milly Kirtland after that last interview, or noticed her in any way if they chanced to meet.

He lived alone with his mother, giving his whole attention to his farm, stock, and to reading and study.

When his mother grew too feeble to bear the burden of her household cares alone he engaged a man to assist her.

As years passed on, he began to take some interest in politics and in the affairs of the community, though steadily refusing to mix at all in society, or hold any intercourse with the opposite sex, and owing to his sterling honesty and to his total freedom from vice of any kind, as well as to the reputation of being the best read man in the county, many offices of trust and honour were filled by him.

Thus we see that while poor Milly had sunk in the social scale, her old lover had been steadily rising.

Of course his wealth and standing were matters well known to the "Widow Maynard," as she was now called, and it is but natural to suppose that she shed many bitter tears over the thought of what might have been.

But whether Bradley was at all aware of her whereabouts and condition was a matter of conjecture only, to the curious upon the subject, for he was never heard to mention her or her husband, even by those who were most intimate with him.

Is it probable that he had forgotten the love of his youth?

Time will determine.

It was a cold, raw day in March. A heavy fall of damp snow had come the night before, and Milly was toiling wearily homeward along the half-trodden country road, carrying upon one arm a basket of provisions—the product of a day's washing—thinking sadly, we may well believe, of her hard lot, and of its cause, for as she paused to change her burden from one arm to the other, she sighed heart-brokenly and murmured:

"Ah, dear! How little I knew! How little I knew what I was doing!"

As if to mock her misery, the jangle of silver bells on harness broke upon her ear.

So deeply absorbed had she been in her own sad thoughts, that they were close behind her already, and she had barely time to step to the outmost limit of the trodden path, when a one-horse chaise dashed by her, a costly leopard-skin robe brushing her coarse, faded shawl as it did so.

Quickly as it passed, she had ample time to recognise its occupant.

One glance at the proudly-erect, massive form was quite sufficient for that, though the face was half-hidden by the fur collar of his overcoat.

It was the man of whom she had just been thinking.

The man who eighteen years ago begged her, with tears in his eyes, not to bid him leave her—him, "the best friend she had in his world."

"Friend indeed," she thought, bitterly. "Much does he know of friendship or love. They are all selfish—all! He wouldn't have known me even if he had looked at me."

It is true he had not even looked at her, his horse, whose nervous ears and uncertain motions betrayed his newness to the rein and the road, demanding all his attention, aside from the fact that he never looked at a woman, under any circumstances, when he could well avoid it.

Poor Milly!

Is it any wonder that, cold, tired, hungry and miserable as she was, she felt his appearance here, at that time, almost a personal grievance?

"How cruel! How unfeeling! to thus flaunt his wealth and high health in my face just now, as if to twit me with my poverty and weakness; and then to so totally ignore me, as though I were no more to him than a stump or a stone beside the way. Heaven forgive me! I could almost find it in my heart to curse him! So hard and unforgiving; and we almost like brother and sister for so many years!"

And tears of grief, anger and bodily suffering filled and blinded her eyes.

A bend in the highway a rod or so ahead brought her in sight of her home.

Beyond this the road was quite hidden from her view, by its making a steep descent, and then, after crossing a shallow, rocky brook, another bend, and winding away behind a patch of woodland; but she was at once aware that something unusual and exciting was being enacted there, for her two boys, the older now twelve, and the younger ten, stood in the yard, gazing earnestly in that direction, while, a moment after, her daughter, now a tall, beautiful girl of sixteen, came flying from the house, bare-headed, and ran with all speed down the hill, followed by the larger of the boys.

The other, seeing his mother, came to meet her, crying:

"Oh, mother, it was our snow-image! We'd made one—Rus and I—just got it done, and it's frightened the horse! and oh, I'm so sorry we did it! Don't scold, mother—we didn't think! But I'm 'fraid it's killed him, for he don't get up, nor stir."

"Killed who? What? The horse?" questioned Milly, growing suddenly so faint that she sunk down for a moment where she stood.

"Oh, the man! the man!" wailed poor Neddy, wringing his hands in distress. "The horse has gone, away out of sight, with the chaise dragging after him. Oh, mother, do hurry! Maybe you can do something for him! Maybe he ain't dead!"

How Milly got over the ground to the scene of the catastrophe she never knew, but she did reach there—the brook, under the hill, as she expected—and there found the man who, five minutes before, had passed her in the pride of his manly strength.

Milly, frightened and conscience-stricken, feeling for the moment that she, with the wicked thoughts she had just been harbouring, was responsible for the whole occurrence, sunk down upon the bank, and stretching out her arms, unmindful of the presence of her children, cried out:

"Oh, Bradley, Bradley! Oh, forgive me, Bradley! I did love you—I loved you best after all, and now I have killed you!" and burst into a paroxysm of weeping.

The children looked wonderingly at their sister, who was a quiet, thoughtful girl, grave beyond her years, but who knew as little as they the meaning of her mother's words.

"Don't, mother," she said, calmly. "Don't. It is Mr. Holmes. I knew him when he passed. I don't think he is dead—his pulse beats a little. Let's try to get him up into the road out of the water."

The first sound of her daughter's voice recalled Milly to herself, and quickly controlling herself, she said:

"Yes, yes, we must—or we must try; but I am afraid we shall not be able to get help."

Fortunately, just at this time, several men came driving past in a chaise, and they, of course, relieved Milly and her children of any further exertion in the removal of the injured man.

He was taken to Milly's house, where she hastily prepared a room and bed for his reception; and then, while a part of the men remained behind doing whatever seemed practicable for the still insensible sufferer, the others went, one for the nearest surgeon, and the other to apprise old Mrs. Holmes of the dangerous condition of her son.

The surgeon came in the course of half an hour, but it was far into the night before the mother arrived.

Hour after hour passed, and the sufferer still lay in the same state of semi-death.

As for Milly, thanks to her long schooling in suffering, she was enabled to go about calmly, rendering most efficient aid, wherever a quick eye and a gentle, ready hand were in requisition.

Her two little boys, in the meantime, were half wild with grief and terror at the result of their thoughtless amusement.

It was nearly noon the next day before the condition of the sufferer gave much room for hope.

The more serious injuries were about the head and shoulders, one of the latter being dislocated, and the head and face out and bruised in several places.

But I shall not linger long over the weary weeks of pain and suffering, of fever and delirium, that followed—weeks which changed Holmes, with his stalwart frame and unyielding will, into the condition of a weak, peevish child, ready to shed tears of

impatience and disappointment if his broth were not ready at the exact moment, or if the coveted orange were not procurable as soon as the desire for it arose.

During all this time—in fact, almost from the very moment that returning consciousness made it possible for the sufferer to recognise those about him, both Milly and her daughter had been religiously and effectively banished from the sick room, his valet being his sole nurse.

The sick man's mother whispered kindly to Milly:

"Maybe you don't know how singular Bradley is about women. He has been so from a boy. You ought to remember that when you were both children you were the only girl he would have anything to say to; and after you were married he seemed to be as much afraid of you as others. It has always been a great trouble to me—his being so strange—but we mustn't allow him to be irritated now, you know, and so, maybe you'd better keep out of the room, as his servant says."

And so, strange as it may seem, for six weeks Bradley Holmes had lain sick, nigh unto death, beneath her roof, and Milly had not had so much as a glimpse of his face in all that time.

And during all that time, too, she and her children had been kept under a discipline little less severe than that of a prison.

But fate had directed matters so far as to bring these two persons under the same roof, and had reduced the one most difficult to manage into a condition of mind and body most suitable for effecting the purpose it evidently had in view, and was not going to be thwarted by a stubborn, self-conceited valet, or a feeble old woman, as we soon shall see.

By the time that Holmes was pronounced convalescent, his mother, worn out by anxiety and watching, became so ill that she was obliged to allow herself to be carried home, though his valet objected strenuously for awhile.

However, he consented at last to let a substitute be employed in the case of Mrs. Holmes; but he felt it his duty to ride over every two or three days to see how she was getting on, always upon such occasions leaving some of the neighbouring men in charge of him, with the strict injunction to let "none of these 'ere women folk in the room, whatever ye do."

Upon one of these visits, when he was not expected back until sometime past bedtime, the man left in charge was sent for during the evening upon some matter which demanded his presence at home.

"Now, see here, Mrs. Maynard," said he, coming out into the little kitchen where Milly and her daughter was sitting, "this is all a piece of nonsense—this keeping you out of the room—all that conceited servant's foolishness. You'd be just the best nurse that Holmes could have—better than that fussy fellow—and now you just go in there and sit down. He is sound asleep, and has been all the evening. Can't hardly wake him enough to give him his drops, and then he never knows who gives them. 'Twon't be time to give them again 'til midnight, and the Grand Duke'll be back himself by that time. Or I'll come back myself as soon as I can, if you like."

Milly quietly entered the sick room, which was lighted only by the soft blaze of a wood fire in the old-fashioned fire-place, and took a seat in one corner, close by the jamb, where the light was dim, but where she could observe the slightest motion of the sick man without changing her position in the least.

The patient was sleeping, with his face turned from her and in shadow, so she could not see the ravages which sickness had made upon it, but one hand lay upon the counterpane, and that was so white and thin, that the tears sprang to Milly's eyes at sight of it.

The situation, the dim room and the silence, were circumstances favourable for thought; and Milly's thoughts took long retrospective journeys during the next hour.

They went back to the time when that thin hand upon the coverlet was muscular, and strong, and brown, and its clasp was warm and friendly. Then hers were soft and white, instead of being dark and rough, and hard with toil, as they were now.

She wondered, was her face as much altered as her hands! She softly rose, and taking down a small mirror from the mantelpiece, looked at the face in it long and sadly.

It was not the face it once was, surely, but not so much changed, after all, as she had feared; for it seemed to her now, that she had not noticed her own face for years.

There were hollows beneath the eyes, and small wrinkles between the brows and at the corners of the mouth, but the teeth were good, and the eyes, spite of the tears they had shed, had, not least, their

soft lustre. If her hair were dressed in old girlish fashion, in loose flowing curls, she would not be so fatally changed.

Almost unconsciously, she loosened her still luxuriant brown locks, and shook them about her shoulders. She combed a tress around her finger, to see if it had forgotten its old trick of curling. It had not, and she kept on, idly, with her thoughts far away, until the whole mass lay about her neck and shoulders in the same soft, shining curls that had once been her pride, and the envy of many of her girlish friends.

Again she looked at herself in the little glass, by the dim light, and a faint smile of satisfaction lit up her face for a moment, then, laying the glass in a chair beside her she clasped her hands in her lap, and with bowed head continued her reverie. Soon a slight movement of the sick man aroused her, and, looking up, she saw that he had turned his head, and was lying with his great blue eyes, now unnaturally large and hollow, fixed upon her face with the wondering gaze of a just-awakened infant.

Milly sat quite still, fearful of doing wrong, and trying to decide quickly what course to pursue, when suddenly the look of wonder changed to one so grieved and wistful and reproachful, and one so thoroughly childish withal, that she nearly cried out for very pity and love.

"Milly, oh, Milly!" he wailed out, in a voice half choked with sobs.

Milly was on her knees by the bedside in a moment.

"Oh, Bradley," she sobbed out in response, "don't look at me so. If I was wrong, if I have caused you to suffer, have I not suffered, too, ten times more than you?"

"Oh, why did you do so?" he faltered, between his sobs. "When I always loved you so! Oh, Milly, can't you love me now?"

"I do love you—I did love you then. I have always loved you," protested Milly, frightened at what might be the consequence of this extreme excitement upon one in his weak state, and desirous only of soothing and quieting him for the time, without a thought for herself, or any future result of the confession she was making. "I thought I loved him, but I didn't—I didn't! I was dazzled and fascinated; and I was vain, proud, and foolish, and everything that was despicable, and wanted to show the other girls that I could take him away from them all. I never was good enough, Bradley; but I do love you—believe me."

She bathed his brow and eyes with cool water, and kept on talking soothingly now as one would to a grieving child.

"There, there! now be quiet and rest, and you shall have everything just exactly as you want it. I'll stay by you and nurse you, and love you always; or I will go away, and you need never see me again—just as you please."

He was growing calmer under her gentle ministrations and soothing words.

In the few succeeding weeks Milly improved in health and looks almost as fast as the invalid. There was no more drudgery for her.

She shared the cares of the sick-room, and the change from her former life of severe toil was so wholesome that she grew fair and young daily.

One question, however, caused her some anxiety, and that was, would he, when restored to health, be of the same mind as now that he was ill and weak?

Were the ashes of his resentment really extinguished, or were they merely scattered by pain and weakness, only to be gathered and fanned into life again as health and strength returned?

While this doubt was tormenting Milly, Holmes, on the other hand, knowing as he did that it was the physician's orders, that was not to be contradicted, and that all causes of irritation were to be strictly avoided, was haunted by the daily returning fear that Milly's oft-repeated assurances of affection were given only for the purpose of carrying out the doctor's prescription and keeping him quiet.

Fortunately, they had ample opportunities for reassessing each other upon these points, but as the conversation of lovers, even middle-aged ones, is not particularly interesting to any besides themselves, I shall weary my readers by repeating theirs.

And why need I say more in any case? Of course no one doubts that they were married in due time, and that their remaining days were so peaceful and happy as to compensate in a measure—in a measure only, remember; no one can quite recover what he's lost by mistakes and wrong-doing—for the sorrows and sufferings of the past.

As for Holmes, everybody said that he was another creature after his marriage. Happiness seemed to have developed in him new faculties and traits, and not only himself, but the whole com-

munity, especially the poor and oppressed portion of it, were gainers by the change.

It just strikes me that the name of my story may not seem quite appropriate, inasmuch as it has taken the whole of it, the story, to bring me to the aftermath; but there's not much in a name after all, so what matter? S. B. L.

FACETIÆ.

PARADOX.

What ought the unfortunate detective officers to be proud of their present reputation?—Because the public never thought so much of them before? —Fanny Folks.

EXPENSIVE.

A NOBLEMAN had a house porter who was an enormous eater.

"Frank," said he, one day, "tell me how many loins you could eat."

"Ah, my lord, as for loins, not many; five or six at most."

"And how many legs of mutton?"

"Ah, as for legs of mutton, not many; seven or eight, perhaps."

"And fattened pullets?"

"Ah, as for pullets, my lord, not many; not more than a dozen."

"And pigeons?"

"Ah, as for pigeons, not many; perhaps forty; fifty at most—according to my appetite."

"And larks?"

"Ah, as for that, my lord—little larks—for ever, my lord—for ever!"

TEARS AND TEARS.

HE.

Why so sad, oh, lady fair,
Why that look of wan despair?
Eyes so bright as thine, my dear,
Never were made to shed a tear.
Tell me, tell me, lady, pray,
Why those features grief betray,
Why those pouting lips apart
Tell a tale of woe and heart?

SHE.

Ask me not why signs of woe
From my drooping eyelids flow,
It is such a bitter grief
That bedews my handkerchief.
Something 'twas at church to-day
Made me in this dreadful way;
Ask no more, for pity's sake,
Or my wounded heart will break.

HE.

"Something in the church," my love,
Earthly griefs is this above;
Have you been a naughty girl,
Over gay in fashion's whirl?
Have some words the preacher said
Stirred a conscience that was dead?
Did this burst of grief begin,
Darling, o'er some girlish sin?

SHE.

Wicked man, to make a jest
When you see me so distressed!
If the cause of all my woe
You are anxious, sir, to know,
Learn it is with rage I cry,
For at church this morning I
Wore a bonnet, French and new,
And Mrs. Smith had got one too. —Fun.

CARVING.

JOINT OCCUPATION.

—Punch.

CASTING ANCHOR.

A LITTLE boy seeing the swan plunge its head under water called out, "Mother, come and see the swan cast anchor."

THE FASHION.

"It's no longer the fashion to send around a slice of wedding cake." They send the receipt how to make it.

RATHER DIFFERENT.

"You didn't laugh at my stupidity before we were married. You always said I was a duck of a lover," grumbled a complaining husband.

"Yes, that so," replied the wife, "and a duck of a lover is almost sure to make a goose of a husband."

SLEEPY.

"Isn't your hat sleepy?" inquired a little urchin of a gentleman with a "shocking bad" one.

"No, why?" inquired the gentleman.

"Because I think it's a long time since it had a nap," was the answer.

WHEN a man saves his cigar money to buy his wife a new bonnet and the children new shoes it indicates a spell of sunshine.

ALARMED.

A NEGRO held a cow while a cross-eyed man was to lift her on the head with an axe.

The darkey, observing the man's eyes, in some alarm inquired:

"You gwine to hit whar you look?"

"Yes."

"Den," said Cuffee, "hold this cow yourself."

SOMETHING THAT WOULD CUT.

WHEN a boy was asked:

"Where was the text this morning?" he replied:

"It was somewhere in hatchets."

"In hatchets? No, it was in Acts."

"Well, I knew it was in something that would cut," said the boy, triumphantly.

CONTEMPT OF COURT.

A CERTAIN judge, whose pompous and officious ways tempted some of the lawyers to acts which his honour construed to mean contempt, fined them ten shillings each.

When they had paid their fines a certain dry and steady-going old lawyer walked up to the bench and very gravely laid down ten shillings.

"What is that for?" said the judge.

"For contempt, your honour, was the reply.

"Why, I have not fined you for contempt," answered the judge.

"I know that," said the lawyer, "but I want you to understand that I cherish a secret contempt for this court all the time, and I am willing to pay for it."

THE MEANING OF IT.

THEY had had their bath and they had afterwards to wait quite a quarter of an hour for the man to take them back to shore, when suddenly one said to the other:

"I do believe it is because we did not give that horrid person some coppers yesterday morning."

And she was right. But however did she guess the truth? —Judy.

ARTICLED CLERKS.

THE clergy should be distinguished as "Thirty-Nine-Articled Clerks." —Punch.

MAKING GAME OF HIM.

ANGELINA: "Going out for that stupid shooting again, Edwin?"

EDWIN: "Yes, dear. Awfully sorry you can't come, too."

ANGELINA: "Well, why not? You can take out the lunch, and I can easily carry home the game." —Fanny Folks.

ARGUMENTUM AD HOMINEM.

It is estimated that the strike in America and the consequent riots cost the United States no less than twenty million dollars. A conflict between capital and labour is ever a sorry affair, but in America these things seem to be as disastrous as they are dollarous. —Fun.

EASILY DISPROVED.

ACCORDING to Sir Wilfrid Lawson, there is nothing in alcoholic beverages which is of the nature of food, and consequently nothing which can make a man either fat or thin. But in this Sir Wilfrid is certainly wrong, whether beer makes a man fat or not, it certainly makes him lean—and sometimes lean very heavily too. —Judy.

THE LAST STRAW.

MANAGER: "Look here! The arrangement of the scene is altered, and you supers will come on to-night from this side instead of that."

DISGUSTED SUPER: "Oh, Lor! There you go again. More study!" —Fanny Folks.

PETITION TO THE FIRST LORD.

Dear Smith, though Benjamin's command Heav's on you honours meet, Pray do not leave our ships to Stand—

A Stationery Fleet. —Fanny Folks.

NOT SO MAD AS HE SEEMED.

A MAN of weak mind took poison in his bed at

Paisley on Wednesday last, and when discovered was chewing the quilt with all his might, and had eaten a small piece of it. This was taken to be still further proof of his madness, but we think it showed his acuteness. Repenting his act, he looked around for an antidote, and failing anything better, he took what he knew was a counter-pain!—Funny Folks.

THE COMING WOMAN.

At a school examination in Wiltshire, the other day, a young female read a poem of three hundred and eighty-nine verses. After the first hundred or so had been read, the examiners became a-verge to hearing any more—which made it three hundred and ninety. —Judy.

A USEFUL ARTICLE.

Of what utility is the first letter of the alphabet to the Unspokeables?—The greatest, as (to the delight of Canon Liddon and Mr. McNeill) it will turn any implement into an impalement. —Funny Folks.

MR. HANNAY, of Worship-street, may be suspected of a fellow-countrymanship with the Home Rulers, since he rebuked a barrister lately, saying: "This course might have been followed before." —Funny Folks.

THE NAVAL EXAMINER AT SEA.

Is the "top gallant" ever jealous of the "beausprit?"

Is the "bonnet" worn by the "windlass?"

If the ship "springs a leak" does the cook use it for his soup?

If the crew are afflicted with the "mal de mer" does the ship "heave to?"

Is a "trial ship" proceeded with before a "jury mast?"

Is the "dog-watch" fed with the "ship's light?"

In port is the "sheet-anchor" folded up and put away in lavender?

Are the "spars" used to "box the compass" with?

Are the "braces" used as a substitute for "stays?"

Is it the "schoolmaster's" duty to see that everything's well "taut?"

Does the "chaplain" have to "holy-stone" the deck?

Has the "spanker boom" anything to do with a "snack?"

When the "signalman" runs up the Union Jack at what pace does he go?

What part of the ship is the "Funny Fokeal?"

—Funny Folks.

FOR THE KNAVY.

"A TRIAL" THRE—from the House of Detention to the old Bailey Sessions in the police van.

—Funny Folks.

A WANT FELT.

It is said that a single fly will in one season lay over twenty millions of eggs. What a pity that we can't get a cross between a fly and a lion!

—Funny Folks.

A CELLULAR TISSUE OF FALSEHOOD.

At the recent Surrey assizes a man named Honey was sentenced to a term of imprisonment for obtaining a couple of tons of rags under false pretences. A mendacious reporter assures us—though we do not for a moment believe it—that the learned judge remarked that "the quality of this 'Honey' would doubtless improve by its being kept a lit le while in its 'cell.'" —Funny Folks.

STATISTICS.

TELEGRAMS.—The number of telegraphic messages forwarded from postal telegraph stations in the United Kingdom from 11,160,518 in 1871 (the first year after the transfer of the telegraphs to the State) to 21,575,207 in 1876. This last number comprises 17,671,518 messages sent from post-offices in England and Wales, 2,383,820 from Scotland, and 1,519,869 from Ireland.

RELIGIOUS CENSUS IN GERMANY.—The following statistics from the last census—that of the 31st of December, 1875—as to the religious beliefs of the inhabitants of Prussia:—Of the 25,742,404 inhabitants of the kingdom, 16,630,990 returned themselves as belonging to the Evangelical National Church; of these 13,266,020 are of the United Church, 2,905,250 Lutherans, and 465,120 of the Reformed Church. Of those who are not of the National Church there are 40,630 Lutherans, 35,090 Reformed, 3,710 Moravians, 2,620 Irvingites, 12,210 Baptists, 14,650 Mennonites, 2,080 Anglicans, Methodists,

&c., 8,625,840 Roman and Old Catholics, 1,470 Greek Church, 4,800 German Catholics, 17,880 Freethinkers, &c., 339,700 Jews, and 4,674 of various other beliefs.

I THOUGHT TO BE ALONE.

I THOUGHT to be alone,
So left the busy world, with all its life,
Its joys, its griefs, its cares, its bitter strife,
And to the woods I strayed one sultry day.
Where solitude and silence would have
away.
For oh, I longed for both. No friends
craved I,
Nor needless words to speak of sympathy;
So, in the grand old woods I sought relief,
Where utter loneliness and silence, brief,
One short hour could be known.

I thought to be alone,
But found the woods alive. Each dell and
glen.
As full of bustle as the haunts of men;
For there small insects chirped in perfect
glee,
And leaves kept rustling in each tall old
tree;
With snaps the grasshoppers rubbed loud
their wings,
And wild birds sang, and bees were noisy
things.
"These woods have too much sound and
life," I cried,
"To soothe my heart," so left its shadows
wide
For other realms unknown.

I thought to be alone,
So turned my steps toward the great wide
sea,
And sat upon the beach, for majesty
And solemn stillness brooded o'er the spot,
Full well I knew. But ah! I quite forgot
That ebbing tides flow never silently,
And dancing waves will murmur of the
sea;
These often roll, and swell, and crash, and
rear,
As madly leaps the surf against the shore
Where silence is unknown.

I thought to be alone.
So turned my weary footsteps quick away
Toward my home, amid the twilight grey,
The sun had set, the evening shades drew
near;
The stars would soon be out, the moon ap-
pear,
And all be hushed and still. But no, some
bird
Called "Whippo-wil," and "Whippo-wil"
I heard
From every tree; then "Kuty-did" was
cried,
While crickets, screech-owls, tree-toads,
each one vied
To swell the din. —Alone?

Alone? No more I mean,
But turn, with tearful eyes and drooping
head,
Resolved earth's busy paths I now would
tread
Without a murmur. Jest, and laugh, and
song,
No more should fret! I would myself pro-
long
The tumult—work, and sing and pray,
And strive by doing good, to drive away
The morbid gloom that solitude would
crave
Which He forbids—for feel we gay or
grave,
We cannot be alone! A. C.

GEMS.

A WIFE full of truth, innocence and love is the prettiest flower a man can wear next to his heart.

He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper. This amiable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels

us to consider it in all its relations. It will not suffer us to be superficial.

A GREAT mind is like an elephant in the ancient line of battle—the best ally, if you can keep him in the ranks, fronting the right way; but if he turn about, he is the deadliest foe, and treads his master underneath his feet. Great minds have a trick of turning around.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

RICH COFFEE CAKE.

Two cupsful of butter, three of sugar, one of molasses, one of very strong coffee, one of cream or rich milk, the yolks of eight eggs, one pound each of raisins and currants, one-half pound of citron, the same of figs; and five cupsful of browned flour after it is sifted. Put the flour in the oven, and watch it well to keep from burning until it is a nice brown. When cold, sift with it three teaspoonfuls of baking powder and a little salt; cut the figs in as long strips as you can; dredge all the fruit with flour; beat the cake up well, and bake in a moderate oven from four to five hours.

NUT CAKES.

One pint of chopped hickory nuts, one pound of sugar, whites of two eggs, two tablespoonfuls of flour; drop on greased paper or tins, like macaroons.

BROILED POTATOES.

PEEL some cold-boiled potatoes, cut in thick slices, season with salt and pepper, dip in melted butter, broil nicely, and serve with a little melted butter over.

BAKED HAMS.

CHOOSE a small ham, and soak over night, putting in quite warm water; in the morning lay it to drain, and wipe dry; mix flour and water in a stiff batter, and cover the ham with it; place it on a trivet or on small sticks laid across the baking-pan; when cooked, trim the rind and garnish as you would a boiled ham.

FISH PIE.

TAKE any of the firm-fleshed fish, cut in slices, and season with salt and pepper, let them stand in a very cool place for two or three hours, then put them in a baking-dish, with a little cream, or water and butter and flour rubbed to a cream, with minced parsley and hard-boiled eggs sliced; line the sides of the dish half way down, and cover with a nice paste. Bake in an oven, quick at first but gradually growing moderate.

FISH SALAD.

PICK up cold fish and place in a fry-pan; season with salt and pepper, the juice of a lemon and melted butter, a little vinegar, and one raw egg beaten; let warm over a slow fire, stirring so they do not burn; place in a dish; serve cold.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE CUNARD LINE.—Orders have been given for the construction of several new steamships for the Cunard line. The first of the series will be a steamship of 5,000 tons for the Atlantic service. This vessel is to be called the Gallia. She will be the largest and most powerful steamship yet built for the Cunard line.

ACCORDING to the researches of Herr F. Muench, our earth has at one time or other been inhabited by 155,000 kinds of animals of which 20,000 are now extinct, while the other 135,000 are still with us. Among the survivors are 2,000 varieties of mammalia, 1,000 of birds, 1,500 of "creeping things," 8,000 of fish, 190,000 of insects, 4,000 of radiata, 3,500 of poly-pifera, 400 of infusoria, and Herr Muench himself.

THE LAST HORSE PLAGUE IN EGYPT.—The great plague in Egypt, which was last January officially declared to be extinct, is supposed to have destroyed over thirty thousand animals. It made its appearance first in the province of Decalieh, and lasted through September and October, destroying in that time 2,902 horses, 435 mules, 1,090 asses. In Garbish, where it lasted a month longer, nine thousand animals succumbed, including 308 camels. In Mono-fish and Béhéré the plague continued still longer, and the losses were proportionate. In Alexandria it was confined to narrower limits, and the daily death-rate never exceeded ten.

THE Camberwell Vestry is going to plant the Old Kent Road, Camberwell Road, Camberwell New Road, and Peckham Road with trees, which are to be five-and-thirty yards apart.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R. M.—Omnibuses first ran in London forty-eight years ago—in 1829.

JAMES S.—The Duke of Cambridge receives £4,432 per annum for his post of Commander-in-Chief.
C. B. N. (Leeds).—This is a professor of Chinese at Oxford University (Corpus), the Rev. James Legge, M.A.

J. J.—Mme. Amantine L. A. Dudevant, better known by her non-de-plume of Georges Sand, died on June 8th, 1876, aged 72. Some of her works are dubious in tendency, others actually reprehensible, and others again very charming. As specimens read "Consuelo," "La Comtesse de Rudolstadt," and "La Petite Fadette." ARCHIBUT.—It is impossible to ascertain if Sir Christopher Wren had any intention to use colour in the interior decoration of St. Paul's. We learn, indeed, from a note in the "Parentalia," that he proposed "to beautify the inside of the cupola with the more durable ornament of mosaic work, as is nobly executed in the cupola of St. Peter's at Rome." Probably the great architect intended to colour, and then partially gild, the domes of the nave and choir, but it must be borne in mind that the tendency of the ecclesiastical architecture of the period was against the use of colour—so much so, indeed, that where any chromatic mural decoration existed in a church at that day it was considered bad taste, and was hidden by the Vandal brush of the whitewasher.

CURIOUSITY.—You will find specimens of flint weapons from the drift both at the British Museum and the one at Bethnal Green. We cannot say anything regarding the recently discovered village painted with "the well-known vermilion colouring." As vermilion is obtained by a difficult chemical process, and is tolerably costly, we should hardly think it was used by barbarians in exterior house-painting.

F. L.—Sir Isaac Newton's reflecting telescope, made by his own hands, was shown at the Exhibition of Scientific Monuments at South Kensington last year.

M. A.—There is a very simple way of avoiding the disagreeable smoke and gas which sometimes pour into a room when a fire is lit in a stove or fireplace on a damp day. Put on wood and coals usual, but before lighting them ignite a handful of paper or shavings placed on top of the coal. This will produce a current of hot air in the chimney, which will draw up the smoke and gas at once.

BOB.—A cement for merschbaum can be made of quicklime mixed to a thick cream with the white of an egg. This cement will also unite glass or china.

SARAH C.—When the carpets are well cleaned sprinkle with salt and fold; when laid strewn with slightly moistened bran before sweeping; this, with the salt, will freshen them wonderfully.

ECONOMY.—A good whitewash for walls is made by adding to fresh slacked lime and water a solution of starch, a little salt, and a few drops of dissolved indigo or bluing.

A MARTIN.—Try the following cure, which we have seen recommended lately: Take a lemon, roll it until soft, cut a thick slice, and bind it on the corn on retiring at night. In the morning, if the corn is white and disintegrated, pull it out with your finger-nails—never cut a corn. Sometimes several applications are necessary, but the corn is bound to succumb, and you can dance the next night if you like. After the corn is removed wear shoes that fit and are not too stiff in the soles.

HOUSEWIFE.—Eggs may be preserved for six months by dipping them in linseed oil and placing them in sand so that they do not touch.

BASSIE.—As soon as any soreness is felt in the ear—which feeling always precedes the regular ache—let three or four drops of tincture of arnica be poured in, and then the orifice filled with cotton to exclude the air, and in a short time the uneasiness will be forgotten. If the arnica be not resorted to until there is actual pain the cure may not be so speedy. Should one application of the arnica not affect a cure it will be necessary to repeat it, it may be, several times.

H. Y.—We do not know for certain, but we have heard that persons suffering from (we suppose incipient) rheumatism have been cured in a few days by eating freely of the delicious esculent called asparagus, while more

chronic cases have been much relieved, especially where the patients have avoided all acids. It is said that the Jerusalem antichoke affords a similar relief.

PERPLEXED ONE.—An unhealthy condition of the hair is produced in various ways, and in your ignorance of the cause you may be making matters worse. Seek the advice and assistance of an expert. You cannot do better than write or go to J. Oliver & Co., 76, High Street, Borough, S.E., whose practical experience would be sure to suggest something to meet your case. One of their pamphlets will give you more information about hair in health and disease and cognate matters than we could possibly afford, even if we had the space at our disposal. You can also get from the same firm photographs illustrating the different prevailing styles in which the hair may be most effectively dressed.

SAND TEST and FILE BATTERY, two friends, would like to exchange carte-de-visites with two young ladies. Sand Test is twenty, tall, fair, good-looking. File Battery is twenty-two, medium height, light hair, hazel eyes.

EMILY, twenty-one, of a loving disposition, domesticated, would like to correspond with a young man about her own age.

A. E. E. B. and UNION JACK, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. A. E. E. B. is twenty-three, fair, blue eyes, medium height. Union Jack is of a loving disposition, curly hair, dark, fond of home. Respondents must be fond of home.

G. A. J., tall, dark, brown eyes, considered good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady fond of home.

NELLY and AMY, two friends, would like to exchange carte-de-visites with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Nelly is twenty-five, fair, of a loving disposition. Amy is twenty-three, medium height, dark.

A. B. C., eighteen, medium height, good-looking, dark hair, grey eyes, would like to correspond with a young lady.

FORGOTTEN GRAVES.

SOMETIMES I think, when all alone
In darkness I shall lie,
Where over the little grassy hills
The winds of summer sigh—
The lowly, grass-grown hillocks,
So scattered everywhere,
That none but Him remembers them,
To keep them green and fair!

I think—when all alone I lie
Where only He can see—
Will any hand pluck from my grave
A flower, for love of me?
Some simple flower, some lowly leaf,
Whose humble grace shall wake
A tender and regretful thought
Of dead years, for my sake?

Will any dear one miss me from
My old, familiar place,
When summer daisies creep between
The sunshine and my face?
Oh, in the wide and weary world
I know not, if, to-day,
Some heart would ache for just my sake,
If I had passed away!

What matters it? If we but rest,
When earthly toils are done,
Whether the daisies o'er us creep
In shadow or in sun?
Oh, sad, forsaken graves that make
Low hillocks everywhere,
His pitying love shall not forget
To keep you green and fair!

E. A. B.

JESSIE, KATE, and LIZZIE, three friends, would like to correspond with three young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Jessie is fair, medium height. Kate is fair. Lizzie has dark hair.

KATE, eighteen, brown hair, dark blue eyes, wishes to correspond with a dark, tall gentleman with a view to matrimony.

MIZPAH, eighteen, brown hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, wishes to correspond with a tall young man about twenty-two.

ALICE, nineteen, dark, medium height, would like to receive carte-de-visite of a gentleman about twenty-one, fond of home.

SARAH L., twenty, dark hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated, would like to correspond with a respectable gentleman not over thirty, with a view to matrimony.

SIRCHER, twenty-three, a signalman in the Royal Navy, medium height, blue eyes, good-looking, would like to correspond with a lady.

NELLY and KATE, two friends, would like to exchange carte-de-visites with two gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Nelly is twenty-three, dark hair, blue eyes. Kate is twenty-one, brown hair, dark eyes. Must be about twenty-six.

W. H. A., nineteen, dark hair, black eyes, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a lady about his own age.

J. J. K., twenty-six, dark hair and eyes, fond of home and children, would like to receive carte-de-visite of a lady.

FLYING ROYAL YARDMAN and SKYSAIL YARDMAN, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two ladies with a view to matrimony. Flying Royal Yardman is tall, dark, hazel eyes, fond of music. Skysail Yardman is of medium height, dark hair, hazel eyes, fond of home and children. Both of a loving disposition.

DOROTHY and DOT, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Dorothy is nineteen. Dot is eighteen. Must be tall, good-looking, fond of home, in good positions.

EVELYN, MABEL, and NELLIE, three friends, would like to correspond with three young men with a view to matrimony. Evelyn is nineteen, fair, golden hair, blue eyes. Mabel has brown hair, considered handsome. Nellie has dark hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of home.

LILY and LOUIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Lily is sixteen, tall, fair. Louie is seventeen, dark hair and eyes, of a loving disposition.

GENTLE ANNIE and PRETTY POLLY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Annie is twenty, fair, blue eyes, medium height. Polly is twenty-one, medium height, dark brown hair and eyes, loving. Respondents must be about twenty-three, dark hair and eyes.

TED and BOB would like to correspond with two young ladies about seventeen. Ted is twenty-one, medium height, good-looking, light hair, hazel eyes, fond of home and children. Bob is eighteen, good-looking, fair, tall, good-tempered. Respondents must be thoroughly domesticated.

WILLIAM and EDWARD would like to correspond with two young ladies between nineteen and twenty-four. William is twenty-six, good-tempered, fond of home and children. Edward is twenty-three, handsome, auburn hair, grey eyes, good-tempered. Widows not objected to.

L. B., nineteen, dark hair and eyes, wishes to correspond with a young man about her own age, and fond of home.

VIOLET and IRENE would like to correspond with two young men. Violet is tall, dark, good-looking. Irene is tall, fair, hazel eyes. Must be between twenty and twenty-four.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

JULIENNE is responded to by—E. K., twenty-five, fair, fond of music.

OCEAN WAVE by—ANN, twenty-three, and fond of music.

CHARLIE by—E. M. W., eighteen.

SAM by—M. S. S., twenty, fair complexion, medium height.

PRIDE OF THE OCEAN by—KATE, twenty, tall, good-looking.

OCEAN WAVE by—Beatrice, eighteen, fair, good-looking.

A TRUE FELLOW by—ANNA, twenty-six, brown hair, grey eyes.

ARTHUR by—A. F., nineteen, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of home.

WALLINGSTONE by—E. L. W., tall, dark hair, and blue eyes.

MICK SWAN by—Laura, twenty, of a loving disposition.

MICK DINGBAT by—Sarah, twenty-two.

A. H. by—True Blue, medium height, black hair, light blue eyes.

PUSS by—Francis, fond of home and children, very loving.

DASH by—William.

DOR by—Edward, tall.

EDWARD B. by—A. B., twenty, tall, fair, good-looking, fond of home and music.

EDITH by—E. G. J., a seaman in the Royal Navy, fond of home and music.

ROSE by—A. G. G., medium height, dark hair, blue eyes.

MARIE D. by—W. H. T.

A. W. S. by—E. K.

F. F. by—S. T.

MAUD W. by—Innism.

AMY by—Charles, eighteen, good-looking, and fond of home.

MAUD by—Bob, thirty, thoroughly domesticated, grey eyes.

WILL by—Mary, eighteen, dark complexion, good-looking.

MILLY by—Harry.

WILL by—Emily, seventeen, good-looking, and brown eyes.

EDWARD by—Mary, seventeen, thoroughly domesticated.

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